Anthony M. Ludovici

WHO IS TO BE MASTER OF THE WORLD?

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

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An Introduction to the Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche

by

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TO HIS

BROTHER GEORGE

THE AUTHOR AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATES

THESE LECTURES

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN REFERRING TO NIETZSCHE'S WORKS.

D.D. = *The Dawn of Day.*

Z. = *Thus Spake Zarathustra.*

G.E. = *Beyond Good and Evil.*

G.M. = *The Genealogy of Morals.*

C.W. = Volume VIII. in the German Edition, and the English Volume containing :—"The Case of Wagner"; "Nietzsche *contra* Wagner"; "The Twilight of the Idols"; "The Antichrist."

INTRODUCTION

DEAR MR LUDOVICI,—

You want me to write an introduction to your lectures? Well, you may have one—you may have one in this letter, which I allow you to reproduce verbatim in your book.

To begin with then: I like your lectures—I think them, in their lucidity, even the best I have read in your language—but I hardly like the notion of your giving lectures on Nietzsche, because I think it contrary to the spirit of your great master to do this. I think it wrong to instruct people—if you have something to instruct them with. People ought to be instructed by those who have nothing to say, nothing to give, nothing to teach, nothing to do. These teachers of nothing do more good than you: they make us slaves, and you know that according to your master, all higher culture must be based upon slavery. Why then interfere with the natural process of enslavement, of stultification, of education which is going on around us? Why not act up to your Machiavellian principles, and rather lecture on the drama, socialism, folklore, the sins of the upper

classes, or the sanitation of Mayfair? Why make a creed popular, which ought to remain esoteric?

But you wish to gain friends to " the Cause." Do you think to make them in a lecture-room? I doubt it. Were you converted in a lecture-room? I belong to a race whose members, when they wanted to know anything, went into the desert and not to the lecture-room, and you, dear Mr Ludovici, told me yourself that, after a book of Nietzsche's had once fallen into your hands, you found no rest or peace until you had gone to Germany, learnt German, and thought and meditated there—in the solitude of a foreign country—on Nietzsche's teaching until you understood it. I myself have often, and unobserved by you, seen you in the British Museum walking about in the depth of thought, and I liked you for it. You think that many of your audience will be able or willing to undergo the hardships, not to say the danger, of your thought? In an age of comfort, of ease, of peace, of happiness, of humanitarian and Christian ideals, you will look out in vain for an intellectual sportsman like yourself.

And have you no pity on those few who perhaps love sport and danger, and who perhaps may be willing to follow you? Will they not be like yourself, seamen upon an unknown sea, exposed to all the inclemency of the weather, to frightful fogs and terrible storms, forced to watch, day and night, for dangerous rocks, which are

marked on no map yet, and only upheld by the feeble hope, that the German Columbus, after all, must have been right: that there must be a new land somewhere beyond, and that the looming coast-line there, upon the horizon, must be that land? Why drag others after you, who perhaps, after a few experiences upon the high sea of the new philosophical thought, will repent and cry for the land and the fleshpots of old England? People who in their despair may jump overboard? People who in their agony may go down on their knees and cry out: "My God, my God, why have I forsaken Thee?" Have you no pity for all their agonies, their doubts, their internal explosions? But I forgot, you have no pity—pity is not a part of your master's creed! After all you are perhaps more of a Nietzschean than I thought, and it may after all be right to lecture on Nietzsche—because it is so cruel.

Another word! A personal but important word! You are young and the sort of fellow the women, who form the principal part of audiences in your country, will listen to. They will pretend to understand—women are very clever in pretending to understand. Instead of finding yourself upon a new continent you may, therefore, land in matrimony and then get back all your lectures—free of charge—by the lecturing sex *par excellence*, women. Do not listen to them. Do not condescend. Don't marry yet. Remember that even the

apostles of the old creed, although followed by women, did not marry them. Remember that you too have to propagate a gospel—and not a race, and that even the propagation of the race, if it is to be worth while, can only take place after the propagation of the gospel. —Yours sincerely,

OSCAR LEVY.

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WHO IS TO BE MASTER OF THE WORLD?

I

NIETZSCHE: THE IMMORALIST *

I AM going to speak to you of Friedrich Nietzsche—the Immoralist. A philosopher more difficult to understand, and yet more full of riches for those who do understand him, it would be hard to find.

Why should I wish to speak to you of Nietzsche? The literature which has grown round his name and philosophy is already enormous. If you have read a third of it, you are already informed concerning him.

Nietzsche died but eight years ago, and he is now one of the most striking figures of modern European philosophy. It is with the deepest regret, however, that the inquirer into his life and works, gradually realises how completely and often maliciously, he has been misinterpreted and misjudged;—not only by ignorant commentators and by many of those learned professors who have been lured to the exposition of his works by the latter's inherent fascination, but even by his best and oldest friends as well.

* Delivered at the University of London on November 25th, 1908.

That is why I wish to speak to you of Friedrich Nietzsche: because he has been misrepresented, and it were well for you to know him as he is;—indeed, it is a pressing necessity that you should know him as he is.

"Mine enemies have grown strong and have distorted the face of my teaching," he says, "so that my dearest friends must be ashamed of the gifts I gave them."*

"... like a wind I shall one day blow amidst them and take away their breath with my spirit; thus my future willeth it.

"Verily a strong wind is Zarathustra for all low lands; and his enemies and everything that spitteth and speweth he counselleth with such advice: Beware of spitting against the wind!"†

It is usual to begin a description, such as the one undertaken in this paper, with a word-portrait of the hero, or, at least, with a short biography. Now, the first, despite its severe difficulties, it might have been well to attempt, had there not been serious reasons for doubting the reliability of existing writers on the subject;‡ the second, however, the short biography, seemed to recommend itself to me even less than the first, and for the following reasons:—the subject I have to treat is a big one, it would therefore have been necessary to compress the biography into a compass so small, that it

* Z., "The Child with the Looking-glass."
† Z., "Of the Rabble."
‡ This was written before Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo* had appeared.

could have proved little more than a wearisome chain of dates, and this thankless interruption I wished, if possible, to avoid.

In view of these considerations, I ventured to depart from the usual methods, and to proceed at once with the discussion of the main theme.

Some people think themselves justified in forming an impression of a man from his works. However deep-rooted this belief may be, which a moment's personal intercourse with any great man quickly proves to be pure superstition, in Nietzsche's case, it is completely upheaved. With him, as with most other authors, we must make the distinction between the man and the writer. He himself warns people against the error of neglecting to do so *:—he himself was the living refutation of that error.

The most that may be said in all security, at the present stage of our knowledge of him, is that he was a modern Heraclitus—a resuscitated Heraclitus, who lived in Europe for fifty-six years of the nineteenth century, and who died at its close. Nietzsche himself would not have been averse to this comparison; he constantly speaks in high terms of the noble Ephesian,† and sought to establish a not insignificant number of his doctrines.

Like Heraclitus, Nietzsche's muses were " Solitude and the beauty of Nature "; like Heraclitus, " he was a

* G.E., p. 245. C.W., p. 86.

† *See* especially pp. 27-43, Vol. X. of Nietzsche's Complete Works, published by Naumann.

man of abounding pride and self-confidence who sat at no master's feet," and like him, too, he was a poet-philosopher whom we might surname " the Obscure."

Obscure—why? What advantage does a philosopher derive from obscurity? Are not the mass of foolish books that have been written about him evidence enough of the futility—nay, the positive danger—of this very obscurity?

Mr Burnet, in his *Early Greek Philosophers*, says of Heraclitus: " Perhaps we may go so far as to admit that his contempt for the mass of mankind made him somewhat indifferent to the requirements of his readers." We shall see that Nietzsche speaks of himself in practically the same way:—" I will have railings round my thoughts," he says, " and even round my words, that swine and enthusiasts may not break into my gardens."*

" I draw around me circles and holy boundaries. Ever fewer mount with me ever higher mountains."†

Nietzsche had little patience with the mass of mankind. The " many-too-many "—" *die viel-zu-vielen* "—the German called them. But it must not be supposed, as many have supposed, that these words express anything more than impatience. We constantly come across passages in his works wherein he most clearly emphasises the respect he felt for the mediocre, and for the necessity of mediocrity; and, in the *Antichrist*, he actually goes so far as to declare it unworthy of a deep mind

* Z., "Of the Three Evil Ones," ¶ 2.
† Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 19.

to take any exception at all to mediocrity *as* mediocrity.* " A high civilisation," he says, " is a pyramid, it can only stand upon a broad basis; it has for a first pre-requisite a strongly and soundly consolidated mediocrity."†

In discussing a philosopher so many-sided as Nietzsche, who sinks with such precision to the very root of whatever subject he gives his attention to, the very utmost I can hope to do, in these lectures, is to rouse your curiosity as to his works, or incite you to a deeper study of them.

In attempting to do this, I shall endeavour, where possible to let him address you in his own words, that you may hear his views, free from the colouring an intermediary—however unwillingly—might lend them; and, also, that you may listen to his thoughts, expressed with as much of their original fire and beauty, as it was possible for a translation to retain.

It has been said by many—more particularly by his fellow-countrymen—that Nietzsche is too dogmatic; that he gives scarcely any reasons for his opinions, and that his philosophy therefore bears a dictatorial and unconvincing stamp.

The two following passages, one taken from *The Twilight of the Idols*, and the other from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, will show us that Nietzsche was not only aware of this particular method in his works, but, also, had his reasons for it.

In the first we read:—

* C.W., p. 342. † *Ibid.* pp. 341, 342.

" With Socrates Greek taste veers round in favour of dialectics. What really happens then? In the first place, superior taste is vanquished, the mob gets the upper hand along with dialectics. Previous to Socrates, dialectic manners were repudiated in good society: they were regarded as improper manners, they compromised. The youths were warned against them. Besides, all such modes of presenting reasons were distrusted. Honest things, like honest men, do not carry their reasons in their hands in such fashion. That which requires to be proved is little worth. All the world over, where authority still belongs to good usage, where one commands—not demonstrates, the dialectician is a sort of buffoon: he is laughed at, he is not taken seriously.

" We choose dialectics when we have no other means. . . . Nothing is more easily wiped away than the effect of a dialectician: that is proved by the experience of every assembly where speeches are made. It can only be a last defence in the hands of such as have no other weapon left. It is necessary to have to extort one's right; otherwise one makes no use of dialectics."*

In *Thus Spake Zarathustra* we meet with another reason. One of his disciples has just asked him why he said that poets lie too much.

" Why," Zarathustra replies. " Thou askest why? I am not of those who may be asked for their whys."

" Is mine experience of yesterday, forsooth? It is long ago that I found by experience the reasons of mine opinions.

* C.W., pp. 110, 111.

" Should I not require to be a very barrel of memory if perforce I must have my reasons with me?

" Even to keep mine opinions is too much for me; and many a bird flieth away."*

Thus, Nietzsche maintained, that to prove is to plead, to plead is to beg, and that he, at all events, did not wish to be a beggar.

Albeit, strictly as he adhered to this principle in the composition of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, this book was so grossly misunderstood when its earlier parts appeared, that, in the end, he resolved partly to abandon the proud non-dialectic position for the semi-dialectic one adopted in his later works.

One may ask: why, as English people should we concern ourselves at all about this German philosopher?

Is it enough that many great men have found it worth their while to give him a respectful hearing, or that his countrymen are beginning to read and learn him in grim earnest? Is it enough that the enlightened Government of France thought it incumbent upon them to encourage the French translators of his works, by subscribing to that translation?

It is for you to decide whether these reasons are sufficient to urge you to turn to him.

Nietzsche says:—" My philosophy reveals the triumphant thought through which all other systems of thought must ultimately go under. It is the great disciplinary thought: those races that cannot bear it

* Z., " Of Poets."

are doomed; those which regard it as the greatest blessing are destined to rule."*

He here speaks of races; he realises that the consensus of public opinion constitutes the philosophy of a country, and guides that country's destinies; and he speaks so solemnly of the new teaching he offers us, that it may not be amiss to ask, whether this is precisely a time when a new philosophy, given to the world with words of such earnest warning, ought to be treated lightly or condemned unheard?

In Germany, Nietzsche was for years admired for his style alone. People did not take him seriously. They would speak of him as the great " Epigrammatist " or " Sentencer." If one ventured to make an inquiry concerning his Ethics, his Sociology or his Metaphysics, one was rebuked, and not always delicately; for his would-be critics did not refrain from pruning, what they held to be his most seditious paradoxes, of all their pregnant context, in order to carry their point. " It is for his style that we read Nietzsche," the Germans would say.

Things have changed.

They are now beginning to read him for other than " style " reasons. For years they refused to listen to what he told them in *The Twilight of the Idols*:—" My ambition is to say in ten sentences what every one else says in a whole book,—what everyone else does *not* say in a whole book." . . .†

* Vol. XV. p. 403, Nietzsche's Complete Works, published by Naumann.

† C.W., 221.

Now they are taking it to heart; they are beginning to see that his aphoristic style was but a form necessary to coping with the difficulties attendant on the distribution of his overwhelming riches;—it was the cheque-book of the wealthy man who cannot spare the time to count out separate coins. But it was only a form, and, excellent though it undoubtedly is, the ideas to which it served but as a means, were ultimately recognised as the still more valuable end.

Germany is now studying Nietzsche, and, if we are to take his solemn note of warning seriously, is it not high time that we, in England, also began reading and learning him?

He was an earnest man. He took his calling very seriously. Like Heraclitus, he parted with his relatives and friends, and lived quite alone, that he might concentrate the whole of his thoughts upon the one problem: are we on the right road? Is our morality—that is to say, the table of valuations which is gradually modifying us, compatible with an ideal worthy of man's inheritance and past? " I love men," said his second self—Zarathustra, " I am bringing gifts unto men."*

Let us be satisfied, for the moment, to know that Nietzsche brings us something quite new—something great and of paramount importance which is quite new, and let us turn to his teaching.

What was Nietzsche? Was he a philosopher? The orthodox world of philosophy says: " He brings us no system! " True, in the same class with Herbert Spencer

* Z., Introductory Speech, ¶ 2.

we cannot classify the German Nietzsche. Nor can we include him in a group of his fellow-countrymen with Kant and Schopenhauer.

Seeing, however, that he not only assumes the authority of the philosopher, but again and again, in his works, also speaks of himself as one, it would be well for us to understand what the term " philosopher " means to him.

" A philosopher's mission," he says, " is to create new values,"—to give mankind new principles, new standards. The ascertaining and classifying of " many little common facts," is useful and meritorious work,* but it is only the menial work which prepares the way for the philosopher.

" It may be necessary for the education of the real philosopher, that he himself should have once stood upon all those steps, upon which his servant, the scientific worker of philosophy, remains standing and must remain standing: he himself must perhaps have been critic, and sceptic, and dogmatist, and historian, and poet, collector, traveller, riddle-reader, moralist, seer and free-spirit besides. . . . But all these are only preliminary conditions for his mission; this mission itself is to create values "; to command and to give laws. " Philosophers determine the ' Whither ' and the ' Wherefore ' . . . they snatch with creative hands at the future, and everything that is or has been, serves them as a means, as an instrument—as a hammer."†

* G.E., p. 212. † *Ibid.*, pp. 151, 152.

Are such philosophers to be found? Nietzsche asks. We shall see that he was one of them.

Before proceeding, and by way of further establishing our parallel, it is interesting to read how Professor Gomperz, in his *Greek Thinkers*, speaks of Heraclitus' mission. " Heraclitus," he says, " was not cast for the *rôle* of an exact investigator, his passions were too free, he lacked the requisite soberness and he was too prone to seek satiety in a debauch of metaphors; but he was admirably suited to be the herald of the new philosophy."*

How perfectly these words express all a fair critic might say of Nietzsche!

In trying to account for the abusive language that has for years been levelled at his philosophy, no fact, I suppose, brings more enlightenment with it than this one:—Nietzsche placed himself " Beyond Good and Evil."

To those who failed to understand even the motive which prompted him to take up this attitude, what course could have been more natural—more obviously pre-determined—than to dub all his works, " dangerous," " immoral " in its worst modern sense, and " seditious "; just as if he had written to release the pent passions of savages, or to cloy the libidinous appetites of satyrs. " The destroyer of morality I am called by the good and the just, my tale is immoral."†

* Vol. I. p. 75, *Greek Thinkers*, by Professor Th. Gomperz, translated by Laurie Magnus.

† Z., " Of the Bite of the Adder."

Nietzsche looked solemnly around him, and an examination of the world led him to ask us the admittedly daring question: Is that which we have for centuries held for good and evil, really good and evil?

Do we understand the part these two terms have played in our history? Is morality, its *raison d'être* and its mode of action comprehended at all? Nietzsche answers these questions with such originality and depth, that at first, willing as we may be to give him a friendly hearing, we are too shocked by the strangeness of his language to be conscious of anything at all, except excessive displeasure. " He will strike at the very heart of our hearts! " we protest indignantly. But if we say that, he is already there—where he wants to be; that is to say, Beyond our Good and Evil.

To his mind, these concepts: good and evil, are but mere means, adopted by all in order to acquire power.* Power for what?—Power to universalise their kind or make it paramount:—power to enable their species, and their species alone, to preponderate or be supreme on earth.

" The refrain of my practical philosophy," he says, " is, Who is to be master of the world? "†

Morality decides this point. The morality which prevails bears its inventors and adherents along to victory with it. If we wish to answer Nietzsche's question: " Who is to be master of the world? " we must ask ourselves, first, what type is attaining to power under the

* Z., " Of Self-overcoming."

† Vol. XII. p. 208, Nietzsche's Complete Works, published by Naumann.

morality which prevails in the civilised world to-day?

Does our table of ethical principles seem to be favouring the multiplication of a desirable type? Is a dignified or noble species tending to prevail by means of it, or is the case precisely the reverse?

Nietzsche challenges us to show that our way is the right way. He does not coerce us, he does not over-persuade; he simply says: "I am a law only for those who are mine, I am not a law for all.* This is my way—where is yours?"†

"Good and evil are the same," said Heraclitus. "Morality is just as 'immoral' as anything else on earth," says Nietzsche, "morality itself is a form of immorality."‡

"Verily, I say unto you: good and evil which would be imperishable do not exist."§

Nietzsche places himself "Beyond Good and Evil"; he undertakes to give us new values; he wishes to purge us of the old leaven. He does not merely destroy, and despoil us of, what we possess; he refills our emptied hands; he is an immoralist first; only, however, that he may be a moralist afterwards. And one more severe, or with a greater antipathy to looseness and *laisser-aller*, we could not hope to possess.

It may now be pertinent to ask, what the figure of Zarathustra means in Nietzsche's *opus magnum*,—the

* Z., "The Supper." † Z., "Of the Spirit of Gravity," ¶ 2
‡ Vol. XV. p. 192, Nietzsche's Complete Works.
§ Z., "Of Self-overcoming."

book to which all his later works serve but as a commentary.

Why Zarathustra? Why should this ancient lawgiver seem to Nietzsche the best suited to be his mouthpiece? He answers thus:—"Zarathustra was responsible for the error 'morality'; consequently, he should be the first to perceive that error. Zarathustra was more truthful than any other thinker before or after him; in his teaching alone, do we meet with truthfulness upheld as the highest virtue, moreover he was braver than all other thinkers taken together. To speak the truth and to aim straight, that is the first Persian virtue. The overcoming of morality through truthfulness, the overcoming of the moralist by his opposite—by me—that is what the name Zarathustra means in my mouth."*

In order to grasp how thoroughly and conscientiously he set about his task, it will be necessary to look back for a moment to see how he contemplated the mission he undertook. For Nietzsche preaches to us, it is true, from a hermit's cell; but he is standing on the shoulders of giants whose strength he has enlisted in his cause. Goethe, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Darwin, Herbert Spencer, are at his fingers' ends, and behind him lie the ancients in whose wisdom he is deeply versed.

Let us hear him describe how he became what he was:—

* Vol. II. p. 430, *Das Leben Friedrich Nietzsche's*, by Elizabeth Foerster Nietzsche.

"Three metamorphoses of the spirit I declare unto you; how the spirit becometh a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child.

"There are many things heavy for the spirit, the strong spirit, which is able to bear the load and in which reverence dwelleth: its strength longeth for the heavy—for the heaviest.

"What is heavy? asks the spirit which is able to bear the load, and, dropping like a camel on its knees, wisheth to be well laden."

And then he describes how the spirit is laden with the wisdom of minds that have preceded it; how it takes up all the knowledge of the past and, under this weight, rises to depart on a voyage of discovery in the wilderness.

"But in the loneliest wilderness," Nietzsche continues, "cometh the second metamorphosis: there the spirit becometh a lion. Freedom it will take as its prey and be lord in its own wilderness.

"There it seeketh its last lord; to him and its last God, it seeketh to be a foe" . . .

But in its way standeth the dragon "Thou shalt."

"Values a thousand years old are shining on its scales, and thus saith the mightiest of all dragons: 'The value of all things is shining on me.'

"My brethren, why is there need of the lion in the spirit? What can the lion do, that the camel—the beast of burden—cannot?

"Create new values—that even the lion is not able

to do, but create freedom for itself for fresh creations, that the lion can do.

"To create freedom for one's self—and a holy Nay even towards duty; for this, my brethren, there is need of the lion.

"As its holiest, the spirit once loved 'Thou shalt,' now it must find illusion and arbitrariness even in the holiest, in order to capture for itself freedom from its love. The lion is needed for this capture.

"But say, my brethren, what can the child do which even the lion could not? Why hath the preying lion still to become a child?

"The child is innocence and oblivion, a new beginning, a game, a wheel rolling by itself, a prime motor, a sacred pronouncing of yea to life.

"Ay, for the game of creating, my brethren, a sacred pronouncing of yea is necessary; it is its own will the spirit now willeth, it is his own world the outcast wisheth for himself.

"Three metamorphoses of the mind I declared unto you; how the mind became a camel, the camel a lion, and the lion at last a child.

"*Thus Spake Zarathustra.*"*

Thus, before Nietzsche could give us new values, he had to attain to his second ingenuousness—to the artlessness of a child; to do that he must have the freedom of a lion, and, before his mind could gain the freedom of the lion, like a beast of burden, it had first to bear the wisdom of the past.

* Z., "Of the Three Metamorphoses."

In an early work, *The Dawn of Day*, he tells us something concerning this wisdom which he acquired, and why humanity seeks wisdom at all.

"Fear," he tells us, "has promoted our general knowledge of mankind more than love; for fear tries to ascertain who the other is, what he knows, what he wants,—it were dangerous and detrimental to deceive one's self on this head."* In order to guard against the danger of lightning, we must know its nature; if we wish to meet a foe with the hope of overcoming him, we must know his resources. Wisdom, like morality, therefore, is a means to power, it strengthens the species.

Another passage in the same book draws an inevitable conclusion from this idea: "Even the sense of truth, which is really the sense for security, man has in common with the animals: we will not allow ourselves to be deceived—we will not allow ourselves to be misguided by ourselves; we listen with suspicion to the whisperings of our passions; we control ourselves and are on the *qui-vive* against ourselves; all these things the animal understands as thoroughly as men understand them; in the animal also, self-control develops out of a desire for the real—for the unmistakable."†

Our hatred of falsehood, therefore, is but the outcome of our loathing of insecurity and its concomitant dangers. We will know everything, that we may be armed against everything. Truth therefore, or our notion of it, like wisdom and morality, is a weapon of power, it makes us and our kind more formidable.

* D.D., p. 260. † *Ibid.*, p. 22.

Now, it is with this fearful eagerness for the truth that Nietzsche asks us: "Where is your way? Who is going to be master on earth?" It is out of a feeling of fear—fear of the future—that he tells us: "No one knoweth yet what is good and what is evil."*

We are all travelling blindly towards a point which we do not know. The colours we fly, the standards of morality we sail under, were followed by a people who wished to attain to power. But these standards mean nothing to us now. We are so used to them, and their colours have got so blurred through wear and tear, that we do not even know out of which port we originally sailed.

"Lo," says Zarathustra, apostrophising the sun at the very beginning of his teaching, "I am weary of my wisdom, like the bee that hath gathered too much honey, I need hands outstretched to take it.

"I would fain give away and distribute.

"To that end, must I descend into the deep, as thou dost in the evening, when sinking behind the sea, thou takest light to the nether world, thou glorious star!

"Like thee, I must go down, as men say, to whom I am about to descend.

"Then bless me, thou tranquil eye, that canst behold the greatest happiness without envy.

"Lo, this cup is about to be empty again, and Zarathustra will once more become a man.

"Thus began Zarathustra's descent."†

* Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 2. † Z., Intro. Speech, ¶ 2.

Like Heraclitus, Nietzsche is a poet as well as a philosopher, and, in these opening lines of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, he will convey to us in what mood, with what depth of conviction, he began his teaching.

. . . . . .

Looking back for a moment, that we may be in a position, fully to realise the magnitude, and great importance to us, of Nietzsche's achievement, let us recall, roughly, what has taken place in European thought since the birth of Christ.

We know now what the culture of the ancient Greeks was. We have learned to admire its character of extraordinary intellectual freedom, the like of which our continent was not to see again for centuries, and we know through what chapter of foolish accidents, it was buried—completely buried alive—by a more youthful and perhaps more implacable rival—the culture of Christianity.

We have but to listen to Tacitus, in order to learn what it meant to the ancient world of thought, to see itself being ousted by the incoming philosophy. Paganism, however, fell, and Christianity rose in its stead.

The period of the Apostolic Fathers, during which Christianity was preached far and wide, was followed by that of a school of philosophy known by the name of " Patristic," to whose labours the establishment of the new faith upon a solid basis in the heart of the old culture is mainly due. The men whose work constituted this Patristic philosophy were chiefly engaged either in opposing paganism and the philosophy of the Greeks,

or in rendering the latter harmless, in so far as opposition was concerned, by incorporating it in the teaching of the militant church.

Scholasticism followed, and philosophy was pursued in a still greater degree under the authority of theology. Its object being the enunciation of Christian dogma in its union with dialectics and reason.

Thomas Aquinas practically put the coping-stone on the Scholastic edifice.

Any further development of it could only lead to its transformation. Once reason and faith had each been allotted its precise *rôle*, and sphere of action, and reason had been enlisted in the cause of faith, to support and consolidate it, wherever it could do so; the aim of the schoolmen had practically been achieved, and their system of thought began to be superseded.

The other causes which occasioned its break-up, were the revival of learning and the re-awakening of the scientific spirit in man, which, resulting as it did in a deeper knowledge of mathematics and physics, ultimately altered the whole of man's attitude towards nature.

From the beginning of the fourteenth century, dates the gradual downfall of Scholasticism and the preparing of the ground for the Renaissance and the revival of learning, *i.e.* a revival, on a larger scale, of all the lofty and independent sentiments in which the people of antiquity had rejoiced, and which had lent their classical period its peculiarly practical character.

The germs of the Renaissance may, of course, be

traced to a date much earlier than the one given; we see them already in the rationalism of the Averroists, in the cells of Gerbert and Roger Bacon, and in humanism.

But not until Petrarch, in the first half of the fourteenth century, introduced the new learning can the wonderful movement be said to have been really under way. With Petrarch, free thought was awakened, curiosity was encouraged, and liberty of action and conscience seemed to be established.

He dared to storm the strongholds of scholastic thought; he attacked the Church of Rome; working with his friend Boccaccio at the publication of MSS. he was practically the inaugurator of the Renaissance in Italy, and he never ceased, during the whole of his lifetime, to encourage and promote that interest in classic literature which he had done so much to awaken. The example he set was soon followed. Italy became a centre of learning and, as we know, in course of time, the languages of Greece and Rome were so completely acquired, that scholars once again handled both tongues in verse and prose. It is interesting for our purpose to note, that even the Church lent its influence to the classical revival. Popes Nicholas V. and Leo X. are examples of this.

At the close of the fifteenth century, the knowledge of Greece and Rome had been almost reappropriated, the dulness and obscurity of mediæval modes of thinking were scorned and superseded—the humanistic movement had actually triumphed.

The progress of the revival was amazing; with almost incredible speed, it passed northward from Italy to Germany, then on to the Netherlands, Spain, France and England; awakening geniuses wherever it made its influence felt, and sweeping away the intellectual cobwebs of centuries.

It is no part of our purpose to decide how far it led to the Reformation in Germany; let us rather hear Nietzsche's own words concerning this stage of European history.

" The Germans have caused Europe the loss of the last great harvest of civilisation that was to be garnered for Europe—the Renaissance. Do we understand—do we wish to understand what the Renaissance was? The transvaluation of Christian values, the attempt, undertaken with all means, with all instincts, with all genius, to bring about the triumph of the opposite values, the noble values. There has been no greater war, there has been no more decisive question than the Renaissance, —my question is the question put by the Renaissance: neither has there ever been a form of attack more fundamental, more direct, more strenuously delivered with a whole front upon the centre of the enemy! To attack at the most decisive place, at the seat of Christianity itself, and here to set the noble values upon the throne, *i.e.* to introduce them into the most radical longings of those sitting there. . . . I see before me a possibility of a perfectly supernatural enchantment and colour charm: it seems to me to gleam forth in all tremors of refined beauty, that there is an art at work

in it, so divine, so devilishly divine, that one might seek for millenniums in vain for a second example of such a possibility; I see a spectacle so ingenious, so wonderfully paradoxical at the same time, that all Divinities of Olympus would have had an occasion for an immortal laughter—Cæsar Borgia as Pope.... Am I understood? Well, that would have been the triumph for which I alone am longing at present—Christianity would thereby have been done away with! What happened? A German monk, Luther, came to Rome. This monk with all the vindictive instincts of an abortive priest in his nature, became furious against the Renaissance in Rome. Instead of, with the profoundest gratitude, understanding the prodigy that had taken place, *i.e.* the overcoming of Christianity at its seat,—his hatred knew only how to draw its nourishment from this spectacle. A religious person thinks only of himself. Luther saw the depravity of Popery, while the very reverse was palpable: the old depravity, the *peccatum originale*, Christianity, no longer sat on the throne of the Pope! But life! The triumph of life! The great yea to all things high, beautiful and daring! And Luther restored the Church once more: he attacked it. ... The Renaissance became an event without meaning —a great in-vain! Ah those Germans, what have they already cost us! In-vain—that has ever been the work of the Germans.—The Reformation; Leibnitz; Kant and so-called German philosophy; the wars of 'Liberation'; the Empire—every time an in-vain for something that had already existed, for something irrevocable.

"... They are my enemies, I confess it, these Germans: In despising them I despise every kind of uncleanliness in concepts and valuations, every kind of cowardice in presence of every straightforward ay and nay. They have tangled and confused for a thousand years almost, whatever they laid their fingers on, they have on their conscience all the half-measures, all the three-eighth measures from which Europe is sick,—they have also on their conscience the foulest kind of Christianity, the most incurable, the most irrefutable that exists,—Protestantism. If we do not see an end to Christianity, the Germans will be to blame for it."*

The harvest of this movement, to which, as we see, Nietzsche grants so much importance, was to be reaped everywhere in the western countries of Europe, and even though some of the greater men came but a century later, the seeds of their wisdom can, without a doubt, be traced to the Renaissance. In this respect we have but to think of Bacon of Verulam, Galileo, Thomas Hobbes, Descartes, Spinoza, John Locke, etc. etc.

In this rapid survey of the progress of Europe's mind we have seen, that from the birth of Christ to the Renaissance, almost all the best available intellect was for centuries engrossed in the one theme—the proving of Christianity to the pagans and the attempt to reconcile Christian doctrine with reason. This was the work of the later, Patristic philosophy and of Scholasticism. Then, suddenly, as if illumined by a propitious flash of

* C.W., pp. 350, 352.

understanding, the mind of Europe seemed to grow clearer; men appeared who were bent on breathing freer, fresher air. More liberty for brain and lungs, greater scope for thought and action, a keener asking of why and how,—these were the ideals of the men whose struggles gave Europe the Renaissance.

Humanism woke, stretched itself, and breathed its quickening principles into the spirit of mediæval Italy. It then seemed nonsense to continue proving what was generally regarded as an accepted truth; because that Christian metaphysics was then regarded as an almost unassailable certainty, scarcely need be mentioned. What was needed was research—research which would lead to a broadening of the basis of knowledge.

Curiously enough, no one attempted yet to question Christian Dogma. It was still believed that God was a power outside the world he had created; that the world continued its existence under his supervision, and that he could, at will, interfere with its existence. Gradually, however, the first mediæval scientists began to observe that things do not occur singly, that there is harmony in the phenomena of the universe. They began to see law and order in what had theretofore seemed chaos, and effects began to be traced to causes. A new notion of God was necessary to fit in with this new aspect of things, and a God was pictured, not outside the world, but in it.

God and the world stood or fell together;—the one was a manifestation of the other. This was Pantheism. Bruno, and later Spinoza (in opposition to Descartes,)

elaborated this view. Leibnitz, who wished to evade both of these men, followed with his Monadology. It is neither convenient nor necessary to describe this theory in detail; let it therefore suffice to say that it was the last attempt, on a large scale, philosophically to uphold Christian metaphysics.

While, however, Descartes, Spinoza and Leibnitz were engaged upon metaphysical research, while they were speculating as to the beginning and end of things, our philosophers, Bacon, Hobbes and Locke, more prosaic than idealistic, more calculating than speculative—in fact more English than continental—were breaking the road to what is now called Empiricism, the philosophy based on experience, experiment, induction. The philosophy which was to influence Voltaire, Condillac, and many other French and German writers, and which was ultimately to make Nietzsche exclaim:—

" European ignobleness, the plebeianism of modern ideas, is England's work and invention."*

All these men, however, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, and later Hume, although prosecuting the search after truth in two totally different directions, aimed no decisive blow at Christian metaphysics, and this despite the fact that Hobbes' views favoured atheism and that Hume was openly anti-theological. The definite step in this direction was left to Kant, who, incited chiefly by Hume's scepticism, constructed his Critical Philosophy.

Although Kant's chief merit as a philosopher lies in

* G.E., p. 213.

his examination of the worth of our knowledge and the value of our means of acquiring it, the agnostic element in his later works gave a turn to modern thought, which was so new, and freed the human intellect so successfully from all theological bias, that, in the light of recent philosophical speculation, it might well be given a more important position.

" Kant terms every philosophy which transcends the sphere of experience without having previously justified this act by an examination of the faculty of knowledge, a form of ' Dogmatism.' He says it is impossible to prove that there is a God. All proofs hitherto adduced are false. The attitude assumed towards religion by Thomas Huxley and Herbert Spencer was thus foreshadowed by Kant, who, as we know, in the end, dealt a heavy blow at Christian metaphysics. In his heart of hearts, though, he believed in God and the immortality of the soul and it is of importance to us to observe, that Christian morality had a sacredness for him which made him quite irrational. His reason partly gets the better of his heart, however, in his writings; and, although he never casts any doubt upon Christian morality, he destroys the highest hopes and the cruellest fears of the Christian religion. Like Spencer, Kant had no special argument against Christianity, he simply urged that all metaphysics are pointless—impossible! "

Freedom of thought was now secured. Kant had swept away old systems of philosophy as untenable; now, among his countrymen, appeared creators of new metaphysics. Hegel came with his system of Absolute

Idealism. Philosophy to him is the science of the absolute. He bases his philosophy upon mankind—upon history. Schopenhauer followed with a doctrine which may be described as "a transitional form from the idealism of Kant to the prevalent realism of the present day." He supersedes Hegel in reputation and in the number of his adherents.

Inasmuch as I shall be able to discuss his view of life only in my next lecture, let it suffice to record here that he left Christian morality practically unaffected. This point is important, more particularly as morality was a subject to which he paid considerable attention.

With Schopenhauer's philosophy, Christian metaphysics may perhaps be said to have received its *coup de grâce*. Nevertheless, just as in the Middle Ages Christian metaphysics had not been treated as a problem but as an already accomplished fact which needed but the support of reason,—just as, immediately previous to Kant, philosophers had begun energetically to criticise Christian metaphysics, although always hoping to hold by it, so now (that is to say in the first half of the nineteenth century) Christian morality had not yet become a problem.

Is it distinctly understood what the term "Christian morality" covers? Some of us may protest that we are not Christians. The term Christian morality, in Nietzsche's philosophy, means that morality which reigns as an ideal of conduct in the most civilised parts of the world at the present day. It is the moral philosophy we inherit and try to make our own without a question,

despite the fact that we may be agnostics, or atheists, or completely indifferent to any form of belief or disbelief.

Now this morality, with its values "good" and "evil," has often enough been called upon to answer for itself. Doubting the likelihood of its having had a divine origin, moralists have not refrained from assigning to it other sources more or less plausible. And the labour expended in doing this has been enormous. Precisely what happened to Christian metaphysics also happened to Christian morality. The question was: could it be made compatible with reason? Could sceptics who had parted with the old Faith, still, by means of reason, be made to abide by Christian morality?

Blindly seizing upon the Christian notions of good and evil, as foregone conclusions, these men, many of whom, remember, were the most rampant unbelievers, consumed all their energy in trying to establish upon rational and scientific principles the moral values current in a creed which they had rejected!

The authority for the old morality was sought by some in a "moral sense," by others in the feelings of pleasure and displeasure, by yet others in law, or in expediency and non-expediency, and by one in a Categorical Imperative.

No one, however, seemed to halt at the terms "good" and "evil" themselves, in order to ask himself: what these words meant: "seen through the glasses of life!"

It will be seen that the step taken by these moral-philosophers was only the first of a long series of steps, which led to a much more pressing and fundamental question. This question was, are the concepts of good and evil which reign at the present day to be adhered to at all? Whatever their respective sources or authorities may be, is not the relation of good and evil to human life still a debatable point?—or are the existing valuations understood in spite of the fact that they have been reft of their superterrestrial warrant?

All the philosophers since the Renaissance had left the morality of the old religion practically where it was; nay, many as we have seen, had sought to fix it where it was with reason; that is to say, had tried to rebuild it upon science, in the hope of making it more compatible with the views of a world that was inclining ever more and more confidently towards a scientific grasp of things in general.

As Nietzsche observes, in every discourse upon morals that had appeared before his time, *the problem* of morality itself had been lacking, the suspicion that morality was something problematic, at all, appeared to be entirely absent.*

To put it in Lecky's words, philosophers had been satisfied to hold that: "The business of a moral philosophy is to account for and justify our moral sentiments, or, in other words, to show how we came to have our notions of duty, and to supply us with a reason for

* G.E., p. 104.

acting upon them."* In short, taking our concepts "good" and "evil" for granted, the question which always occupied them was, how could these best be justified, or made compatible with reason.

. . . . . .

We are now prepared to understand how it was, that the world suddenly stood aghast, when a man appeared, who towered as completely above these moral compromisers and cutters of misfits, as Kant had towered above the metaphysicians who preceded him.

We can almost sympathise with the "start" Europe must have been given when, above the muddled murmurs over morality, a roaring voice suddenly announced, amid a veritable hail of epigrams: "No one knoweth yet what is good and evil!"

"No one knoweth? Why, a moment ago we all knew!" This was the cry of the Europe that was baffled and startled,—of the Europe that was convinced that Nietzsche must be raving mad!

What is the net result of your giving "a basis to morality?" Nietzsche asked of the moralists at his back. It is simply this, that we have the learned expression of your good faith in that morality which happens to be prevalent in your quarter of the globe at the present day.† But I tell you, speaking in your own language, that "life itself is something essentially immoral!"‡

* *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne.*
† G.E., p. 104.
‡ *Birth of Tragedy* (German Edition), p. 10.

"Life is appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, obtrusion of its own forms, incorporation, and at least, putting it mildest, exploitation."*

We know it is all this; but at the present day we should like to believe that it is not so. We know it is all this: but we prefer to blind ourselves to the real facts, and to say with Spencer simply: "Life is activity!"†

Activity may mean anything, harmless or harmful. We must therefore define our word. What do the evolutionists say? The activity they speak of is the "struggle for life."

Nietzsche says this definition is inadequate. He warns us not to confound Malthus with nature.‡ There is something more than a struggle for life, between the organic beings of this earth;§ want which is supposed to bring this struggle about, is not so common as is supposed; some other force must be operative. Is there no aggression without the struggle for existence? Nietzsche answers in the affirmative, and his reason is, that life is not "activity" striving after survival alone, but after power. Not Schopenhauer's will to live, but Will to Power is the motive force behind all living phenomena; the instinct of "self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results thereof."|| Every

* G.E., p. 226.

† *Principles of Biology*, Vol. I. p. 113. *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. I. p. 485.

‡ C.W., p. 177.

§ On this point see some interesting remarks by W. H. Rolph, pp. 94, 95 of his *Biologische Probleme.* (Edit. 1884.)

|| G.E., p. 20.

species of organic being behaves as if its kind alone should ultimately become paramount upon earth, and whether it attempt to achieve this end by open aggression or cowardly dissimulation, the motive in both cases is the same.

Moreover there are many things valued higher than life itself by living beings;* the Will to Live, therefore, often finds itself opposed to a still higher Will. What, then, is this mightier force to which the will to live sometimes has to submit? We have heard what Nietzsche calls it—it is the Will to Power.

Nietzsche now goes to the root of the matter, by applying this doctrine to man, and the morality of man. He says, before we justify or account for our modern European morality, are we certain that the values "good" and "evil" which it gives us are to be upheld or retained at all? Are we clear as to what they mean?

But, above all, are we clear as to what morality means? How does it appear "seen through the glasses of life?"

If we turn to Nature, we find every species of organic being instinctively adopting and practising those acts which most conduce to the prevalence or supremacy of its kind. If it fail to discover that conduct which will bear its kind to power, either by aggression or by dissimulation, then, the chances are, that it will be exterminated: those animals are already doomed to become extinct that cannot select that order of conduct which is best calculated to make them overcome, either

* Z., "Of Self-overcoming."

numerically, strategically, or by sheer physical strength, the will to power of other species. But, once that order of conduct is found, proved efficient and established, it becomes the ruling morality of the species that adopts it, and bears them along to victory with it. That is all perfectly clear.

The animal world, therefore, is the scene of an uninterrupted war—the war of modes of conduct. If a devouring species ever adopted the system of valuing, current among the species devoured, it would thereby achieve its own extinction, and *vice versâ*. The lion's " good " is what is good for him. It may be the antelope's notion of " evil," in fact it generally is, and if the antelope's notion of " good " were ever adopted by lions, these would have to cease their slaughter among the antelopes.

With the help of the evidence afforded by biology, Nietzsche therefore inquires whether it is sufficiently recognised that concepts of good and evil are originally only a means to an end, that they are only the expedient of a species to acquire power—power to become paramount?

The fact that the war of conducts which now especially concerns us, is a war carried on among men, does not in the least alter the first principles of the question. Wherever we find " good " or " evil " used to designate one or another mode of conduct, we may be sure that one particular species of man is there attempting to ensure his supremacy under the cover of these values.

So far, therefore, Nietzsche merely takes up the

position of the relativist with regard to morality. Good and evil, he says, are relative values. They are a question of point of view. Absolute good and absolute evil are myths.

" Many lands were seen by Zarathustra, and many peoples: thus he discovered the good and evil of many peoples. No greater power on earth was found by Zarathustra than good and evil.

" No people could live that did not in the first place value; if it would maintain itself, however, it must not value as its neighbour doth.

" Much that one people called good, was regarded with scorn and contempt by another: thus I found it. Much I found named evil here, and there decked with purple honours.

" A table of values hangeth over each people. Lo! It is the table of their triumphs, behold it is the voice of their will unto power.

" Whatever enableth a people to dominate and conquer and shine to the horror and envy of its neighbour, that is regarded as the high, the first, the standard, the significance of all things.

" Verily men have made for themselves all their good and evil. Verily, they did not take it, they did not find it, it did not come down as a voice from heaven.

" Values were only assigned unto things by man in order to maintain himself—he it was who gave significance to things, a human significance. Therefore he calleth himself man, *i.e.* the valuing one."*

* Z., "Of a Thousand and One Goals."

Every moral principle which Nietzsche saw exercising power in this world, he attributed to the will of some species of being, which therewith desired to attain to ascendency over his fellow beings.

From the ichneumon fly, which has to regard as "good" the laying of its eggs inside the skin of an unsuspecting caterpillar which is afterwards devoured alive by the hatched brood, to the action of the cannibal who thinks he must eat his enemy that he may acquire something of the latter's prowess and ferocity, the basis of every action to be witnessed on this earth seemed to Nietzsche the instinct of self-universalisation or self-enhancement, led by the thirst for power.

This doctrine was a revelation. All the difficulties attendant on the absolute view of good and evil, seemed to vanish in the light of Nietzsche's discovery. We could now group together the thousand and one different concepts of "good" distributed over the man-inhabited parts of the world, and understand their origin at a glance; indeed, with Nietzsche's view of the meaning of good and evil before us, we should even have felt some surprise at finding but one notion of good ruling everywhere. Nations, like species of animals, must value differently, otherwise they cannot resist each other.

Reasonable as this aspect of morality may appear to us now, however, we can readily understand why (when it was first put before the world, that is to say, at a time when people had scarcely digested Darwin), it seemed to all but a few, little short of dangerous madness.

The Christian notions of good and evil,* having grown, so to speak, into the modern, civilised man's blood, he had come to regard them even as the moral philosophers had done, that is to say, as facts which needed but to be accounted for; and, although the evidence that other moralities flourished and protected people elsewhere, proved rather a " stumper " to him; still he believed that his particular notion of good would ultimately become universal and thus clear up the vexed question.†

A conclusion so profound as that of Nietzsche's was, of course, not the work of a day or of a year of days. Indeed it might be looked upon as the result of his life's study. He tells us that as early as his thirteenth year the origin of evil haunted him. " A little historical and philological schooling," he continues, " together with an inborn and delicate sense regarding psychological questions, changed my problem in a very short time into that other one: under what circumstances and conditions did man invent the evaluations good and evil? And what is their own specific value? "‡

It was only in the summer of 1864, however, when he was in his twentieth year, that he began to approach a solution of the difficulty, and in the following manner:— He was expected to do some work during his holidays,

* *See* pp. 28, 29 of this paper.

† For a remarkable confirmation of this statement see Sidgwick's *The Methods of Ethics*, p. 14. Here, although not speaking as a Christian, Sidgwick actually expresses the hope that all " methods " may ultimately coincide.

‡ G.M., p. 4.

and it was to consist of a Latin thesis upon some optional subject. He chose Theognis, and, it was while studying the latter's works, that he was struck with the author's use of the words " good " and " bad " as synonyms of aristocratic and plebeian.*

This was the first hint that put him on the right track. With it he grew more than ever convinced that there could be no absolute or universal Good and Bad; that different modes of valuing conduct must be just as instinctively adopted and adhered to by different classes of men as they are adopted and adhered to by different classes of beasts, and when Theognis, in the sixth century B.C. spoke of the democrats as " bad," and of his party as " good," at a time when the fall of Theagenes, tyrant of Megara, had brought about a struggle between the oligarchy and the democracy, the fact that was plainly to be read from the particular use of these two words, was, in Nietzsche's opinion, that Theognis and his party, wishing to maintain their power, had to regard any force which threatened to thwart that very natural desire as bad,—" bad " in the sense of " unfriendly to their particular mode of power."

From that time forward, Nietzsche began to regard our modern values " good " and " evil " with ever-increasing suspicion, and literally did not rest until he had formulated the theory expounded in his latter works.

Of course we had had moralists, or preferably im-

* Deussen, *Erinnerungen an Friedrich Nietzsche*, p. 11.

moralists, who, without offering a substitute, had attacked the Christian values. French books had been plentiful, and Stirner in modern times had presented us with a strikingly original and very deep work on the subject.* But the only favourable comment we find concerning any modern school of ethics, in Nietzsche's works, relates to Herbert Spencer. The position Spencer assumes, although not sanctioned by Nietzsche, is nevertheless declared to be "psychologically tenable."†

With the metaphysics of Christianity in ruins behind him, it will be seen that Nietzsche took a step as bold and stupendous as Kant's, and as necessary; but against that remnant of Christianity which his great predecessor and the orthodox world perhaps cherished as even more sacred than the metaphysics.

Nietzsche attacked Christian morals. He declared them to be, like all other morals, merely an expedient for lending power to, or universalising, a certain type of man. His courage was unprecedented, his wickedness, of course—terrible!

Conceiving all moralities to be but codes adopted by various peoples in order to perpetuate their kind or make it alone paramount, we have seen that he had to face the disconcerting corollary that all kinds of men, like all kinds of animals, must at some time or other have taken to moralising. Conflicting moral codes were, therefore, nothing but the conflicting weapons of different species of men. Thus, the important question to be answered was, not so much, what class of man now be-

* *Der Einzige und sein Eigentum.* † G. M., p. 20.

lieves in such and such a moral principle and tries to act upon it? but in what class of mind must it have originated?—for then it would be made clear what type would ultimately owe its preservation to it.

What sort of morality shall we now allow to rule? The solution of that problem will determine who, ultimately, will be master on earth!

We know that Christianity has come forward for two thousand years with its solution of the problem. Let us pause to ask ourselves, says Nietzsche, who is tending to attain to power under it?

We can understand now, how it was he said: "Good and evil themselves are but intershadows and damp afflictions and wandering clouds."*

And we can follow him when he exclaims:—"When I came unto men, I found them sitting on an old conceit. All of them thought they had known long what was good and evil unto man.

"All speech about virtue appeared unto them an old weary thing, and he who wished to sleep well, still spoke of 'good' and 'evil' before going to bed.

"This sleeping I disturbed when teaching that no one knoweth yet what is good and evil!"†

I warned you that it was time we began reading and learning Nietzsche in England. I think you will now be willing to grant, that the importance of his philosophy warranted my words of warning. With the religious sanction destroyed, and moral valuations shown to be but the self-enhancing expedients of a species, morality

* Z., "Before Sunrise." † Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 2.

derives this enormous advantage, namely: it is freed from all taint of morality!—virtue or vice in the old sense. It becomes an adjustable instrument in the hand of the moralist wherewith he can rear a species—a world-conquering species, provided the code he writes be calculated to make such a type thrive.

" With your values and words of good and evil, ye exercise power, ye valuing ones."*

" No greater power on earth was found by Zarathustra than good and evil."†

These values are things to be juggled with for our highest ideals. Not what the past has cherished and revered as good and evil is the question; but what notions of good and evil are we going to allow to persist?

That good and evil, we are now at liberty to choose, we have now a perfect right to determine. The yoke of tradition has been lifted from our necks. Too long had we ascribed to the inventiveness of an all too officious divinity, the laws which are purely human in origin. Nietzsche and Herbert Spencer are here in perfect agreement, as are also most modern ethicists outside the church and chapel.

" Who is to be master of the world? " This is of unparalleled importance; this is moreover a question beset with considerable difficulties;—for, like all really important questions, it is solely and purely a matter of taste.

Morality is ultimately, and through and through, a

* Z., " Of Self-overcoming." † Z., " Of a Thousand and One Goals."

matter of taste. With our choice of moral valuations, we betray our choice in regard to man; we divulge our taste in regard to what species of man we would see attain to power.

Nietzsche knew perfectly well, that to break all tables of good and evil, and then to construct a *new* table compatible with his ideal of man, meant abandoning his position as a relativist; hence his emphatic acknowledgment of the fact that there are other ways than his,* hence, too, his definite utterance concerning his attitude towards morality in these words: †—

"No good, no bad, but my taste, for which I have neither shame nor concealment."‡

The first problem that faces us, however, on the new road, is this:—We are in a world already possessed of moral values, are these existing values to be wholly discarded? How can we select from among the values of the past, those we still hold to be compatible with our ideal,—compatible with the man whose kind we would see paramount?

Nietzsche gives us the clue; but along with it, curiously enough, comes that part of his moral philosophy which accounts for probably three-quarters of his bitterest enemies.

He says § he has investigated the finer and coarser moralities which have hitherto prevailed or still prevail on earth, and in them all has found certain traits recur-

* Z., "The Spirit of Gravity," ¶ 2.

† On this point see Dr A. Tille's *Von Darwin bis Nietzsche*, p. 238.

‡ Z., "The Spirit of Gravity," ¶ 2. § G. E., p. 227 *et seq.*

ring so regularly together, that, at last, he was obliged to recognise two fundamental types—two distinct classes of morality which appear to be in a state of perpetual conflict on earth. In mankind, there is a continual war between the powerful, the noble, the strong and the well-constituted on the one side, and the impotent, the mean, the weak, and the ill-constituted on the other. The war is a war of values; occasionally, as history shows, it becomes a war of grapeshot and guillotines—a war to the knife; but the values that are fought for are always the values of a *master-morality* on the one hand and of a *slave-morality* on the other.

Nietzsche recognises a fact that is mostly overlooked by those who declare the self-preservative instinct to be the prime motor of organic life.

"A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength,"* he says.

The natural function of the strong, of the exuberant, is to discharge their strength and to spend their energy. "To demand of strength that it should not manifest itself as strength, that it should not be a will to overpower, to subdue, to become master of, that it should not be a thirst for enemies, resistance, and triumphs, is just as absurd as to demand of weakness that it should manifest itself as strength."†

The strong *will* and must discharge their strength, and in doing so, the havoc they may make of other beings in their environment is purely incidental. There is a superfluity of energy in them, an excess, which is

* G.E., p. 20. † G.M., p. 44.

neither claimed nor availed of, by any circumstance in their lives. This superfluity, this excess, is the pressure in them which accounts for their acts of destruction for destruction's sake; it is the motive force which explains their will to overpower, to create or destroy above their immediate needs, to create at all, and to sing, shout, spring, play, romp, kill, oppress, and seek danger. These natural functions of the strong, the hale and the hearty, like all natural functions, were perforce regarded as "good" by those who possessed them. Valuing as all must value, who wish to maintain their power, these strong ones, the natural masters of any community in which the qualities they possessed meant self-aggrandisement, declared *that* to be good which was their good; bad, to them, meant all that which was unlike them,—the despicable, the weak and the ill-constituted.

But, curiously enough, there is one trait common to both masters and slaves, which is, that both, somehow, desire to make their species paramount, and, if possible, to attain to supremacy. What, then, could be more self-evident, more pre-determinated, than that the natural slaves, that is to say: the mean, the weak, and the ill-constituted, should also moralise? They must also have a concept of "good," and that concept must likewise be a self-enhancing concept; it must be their good, and everything that thwarts it must be *their* evil. Do we find the weak and the ill-constituted moralising thus? Nietzsche craves attention; he says they do.

He illustrates his meaning by declaring the master-morality to be that which, standing above, looks down-

wards, thus obtaining its own peculiar perspective; and the slave-morality to be that which, standing below looks upwards, thereby obtaining a perspective quite its own.*

In the first, the master-morality, it is the eagle which, looking down from a ledge of rock upon a browsing lamb, contends that "eating lamb is good." In the second, the slave-morality, it is the lamb which, looking up from the sward and espying the eagle, bleats dissentingly: "eating lamb is evil."

We know that these two classes exist everywhere on earth. Mankind, irrespective of racial distinctions, does fall into the two broad classes already described. We are moreover compelled to admit that both classes moralise, are forced to moralise, in order to meet that ever-pressing desire to acquire power for their species; but, when we have acknowledged this we have done all that Nietzsche wishes of us; for it is the key to the whole question of morals to-day; it is the clue to the answer of Nietzsche's haunting question: "Who is to be master of the world?"

Of course, as we are told in *Beyond Good and Evil*, in all higher and mixed civilisations, attempts have now been made to reconcile the two moralities; at present, they are seldom found juxtaposed in sharp contrast. They are more often found confused and mingled in one community, in one man; yea, often in one soul.

But, that we may trace, and know how to distinguish, them, when we meet with them, we have only to think

* G.E., pp. 43, 44, 241.

of what probably took place when the ruling caste and the ruled class took to moralising.

Taking the ruling caste first, it is clear that they must have posited the proud and exalted states of the soul as " good," as also all that is strength, power, health, well-constitutedness, happiness and awfulness; the antithesis " Good " and " Bad " to this first class meant the same as " noble " and " despicable." Even our word " noble," which was originally expressive of social status, shows us, when we apply it to character, who *they* must have been who first appropriated it as a designation of their caste.*

" Bad," in the master-morality, must have been applied to the coward, to the over-anxious and niggling one, to the man with " the eye to the main chance," as also to the distrustful one with the stealthy glances, the self-abasing one, the dog-like kind of man who submits to being mishandled, to the mendicant flatterer, and above all to the liar. It is a fundamental belief in all aristocratic communities, that the mob consists of liars. " We, truthful ones," thus spake the noble Greeks of themselves and their equals.

With the second type, the slave-morality, the case is different. There, inasmuch as the community is an oppressed, suffering, unemancipated, and weary one, all *that* will be held to be good which alleviates the state of suffering. Pity, the obliging hand, the warm heart, patience, industry, humility and a sneaking friendliness

* On this point see Spencer's *Sociology* (1st Edit.), Vol. I. p. 687.

towards honours,—these are unquestionably the qualities which we shall here find flooded with the light of approval and admiration, because they are the most useful qualities;—they make life endurable. To this class, all that is *awful*, instead of being regarded as good, as it was in the morality of the ruling caste, will be precisely *the* evil *par excellence*, quite the worst kind of evil, because it cuts at the very roots of the community's existence. Strength, health, superabundance of animal spirits, and antagonistic power of any sort whatever, are regarded with hate, suspicion and fear by the ruled class. To them the virtues of their rulers are vain, pointless, evil. Even the happiness of those above them, they would fain regard as delusive and spurious. He is accounted " good " amongst them, who is harmless, good-natured, easily-gulled, and perhaps a little foolish;—in short, a good sort of fellow.*

Now, in this rough analysis of the two fundamental types of morality, we have our touchstone for the work of selection which lies before us; for unless we are quite apathetic, we must know that the process which is most needful at the present day, is that of selection: not alone in morality, but perhaps in every department of our social life.

As it went with Nietzsche, so it will go with us. We shall find the master- and the slave-morality everywhere mingled and confused, sometimes beyond recognition. We must not be surprised to find, here and there, men like harlequins, patched by lord and serf. In cer-

* G. E., pp. 227-232.

tain parts of the world, and not necessarily far from home, we may find the slave-morality triumphing over the other kind, and we may there observe what type of man is tending to dominate under the existing conditions. Before determining what our good and evil are going to be in the future, the results of such observations must be duly weighed in our minds. That is what Nietzsche means when he bids us take our stand beyond good and evil; that is the position he would have all new philosophers assume; it is, at the same time, the position which has earned for him the titles "dangerous," "vicious," and "iniquitous," from the courteous lips of "the good and just."

"There is an old illusion called good and evil," Zarathustra declares. "Round fortune-tellers and astrologers, hitherto, the wheel of that illusion hath turned.

"Once the folk believed in fortune-tellers and astrologers, and therefore they believed: 'All is fate. Thou shalt for thou must.'

"Then, at another time, they mistrusted fortune-tellers and astrologers, and therefore they believed: 'All is freedom. Thou canst for thou wilt!'

"O my brethren, as to the stars and the future, there hath only been illusion, not knowledge. And therefore, as to good and evil, there hath also been illusion, not knowledge!"*

This roughly speaking terminates the account of his analysis of the past in morality. The questions of conscience and the sense of guilt, as treated by Nietzsche,

* Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 9.

ought, strictly speaking, to be dealt with now. Seeing, however, that this could not be done adequately, and that they both deserve very serious attention, it is perhaps best to avoid them altogether here, though not without a hope, that I may be able to treat of them later.

As we have already seen, Nietzsche was a moralist as well as an immoralist. He destroyed, only in order to be able to construct afresh. " He who must be a creator in good and evil," he says, " verily, he must first be a destroyer, and break values into pieces."*

Having shown us that morality is merely a matter of taste, Nietzsche proceeds to divulge his taste in regard to the all-important subject.

Every notion of good and evil, which we cherish, Nietzsche, like a numismatist, takes up and examines, and, before he estimates its worth, inquires in what class of mental mint the coin originated. This question, and the relentless way in which he puts it and answers it, during his examination of modern European values, practically constitutes the nutshell of his ethics.

The moral code he offers us, in exchange for the one he would see us partly abandon, and the high ideal to which it is intended to attain, I cannot now consider with you. In my next lecture, when I shall treat of Superman, I will describe Nietzsche's ideal, that is to say, the Man of his taste, and, in the last one, " Nietzsche the Moralist," I shall attempt to deal with the constructive side of his moral philosophy.

* Z., " Of Self-overcoming."

Let it now suffice, to perceive, that the slate is clean, and that we have been warned concerning the *blood* of old laws and principles which may crave a place upon our new tables of commandments.

Morality is a problem which we are left to solve for ourselves. We must, henceforth, determine our good and evil. The good and evil of past peoples, races and tribes, has not been utterly condemned, it has merely lost the whole of its authority.

Now, since moral valuations are pointless unless they have a goal in view,* unless they are the expedient to the enhancement of a certain species of man, it is obvious that our duty is to decide what this species of man is going to be, and then to determine our good and our evil accordingly.†

The responsibility thrown upon us is enormous; we are all put upon our mettle; our taste becomes our prime monitor, and we betray our taste to the world, when we declare what our ideal, our good and bad, is going to be,—when we declare whom we would make master upon earth.

I need hardly to tell you how deeply Nietzsche was conscious of the responsibility he threw upon our shoulders when he invited us to reconsider our position. The following lines from *Zarathustra* are evidence enough of his earnestness, and with them I shall conclude:—

"O my brethren, when I bade you break the good

* Herbert Spencer, Vol. I. p. 33, *Principles of Ethics*: ". . . the notion of perfection, like the notion of goodness, can be framed only in relation to ends."

† See *Von Darwin bis Nietzsche* (by Dr A. Tille), pp. 19, 22.

and the tables of the good—it was then only that I put man on board ship for the high sea.

" Only now cometh the great terror unto him, the great look round, the great illness, the great loathing, the great sea-sickness.

" False shores and false securities ye were taught by the good. In the lies of the good ye were born and hidden. Through the good, everything hath become deceitful and crooked from the root.

" But he who discovered the land ' man ' discovered also the land ' human future.'

" Now ye shall be unto me sailors, brave, patient ones!

" Walk upright betimes, O my brethren, learn how to walk upright! The sea stormeth, many wish to raise themselves with your help.

" The sea stormeth. Everything is in mid-sea. Right away! Come on ye old sailor hearts! "*

* Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 28.

THE END OF LECTURE I

II

Superman *

It was found convenient to treat Nietzsche's doctrine of the Superman, next, in order, and for the reasons stated in the last paper. It will be remembered that moral values were there said to be quite pointless, which did not have the rearing of some particular type of man as their end, as their goal.

"Who is to be master of the world?" was the question which recurred in my last lecture; we saw that this was entirely a question of taste, and moreover, one left for us to decide. We saw, also, that in deciding it we involved ourselves in a still more intricate question,—the question of morality, and that the one conditioned the other.

Taking Nietzsche's doctrine of Superman, his taste in regard to man, first, therefore, we shall be better prepared, when the time comes, to understand the morality with which he wishes to attain to it; this morality, as I have already informed you, I shall discuss in the last paper.

. . . . . .

Nietzsche speaks of himself as a firstling and he adds: "firstlings are ever sacrificed." To the old idols, on the altars of society's old idols, firstlings are ever sacrificed; they are young; their flesh is still tender; that tickleth

* Delivered at the University of London on December 2nd, 1908.

old palates. How could firstlings help being sacrifices, since they excite old idol-priests?*

Already in 1883, Nietzsche could speak in this way of himself and of those whom he wished to rally round him. Two parts of his *Zarathustra* had been written; five most original books had gone out to the world, and he was beginning to understand, from the reception these works were receiving, that his mouth was not for the ears of his time.

What people did not comprehend in him, they disliked; what was new and strange, proved irksome to them, and everything that threatened to disturb their smug ease, they did not hesitate to reject. In short, as he tells us, they sacrificed him, like a firstling, to the idols that still held sway over them.

Nietzsche made a special diagnosis of European culture, and he found it attacked by a terrible disease —the " Paralysis of Will."† He found Europe settling down smugly to a pitiable self-complacency, and it was the struggle of his lifetime to awaken her to a sense of her danger.

Indeed, so concerned was he, on her account, that he even wished her a formidable foe,‡ that she might be compelled to make up her mind to become equally formidable. On the one hand there was a sort of Quietists who believed: " Everything is equal; nothing is worth while, the world is without sense, knowledge choketh "; on the other, were those who still clung

* Z., " Of Old and New Tables," ¶ vi.
† G.E., p. 145. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

fanatically to Christianity as the best alternative, the best opiate—the softest couch; and there was yet another class which, although it remained apathetic concerning superterrestrial possibilities, was willing to embrace any cause or belief, provided its specific aim were to bear its adherents to the greatest remoteness from pain of any kind.

All these classes, however, were unanimous in this one idealisation of the notion Progress: that it meant that at some time or other—to be made as proximate as possible, there would be nothing left to fear, nothing left to tremble at, in the whole of the civilised world.*

Everywhere, virtue was being associated and confounded with those qualities which lead to the greatest possible amount of ease. The most virtuous man was the tamest man, because he would be the least likely person to ruffle other people's feelings, or to make ripples upon the calm waters of peace and comfort.

Conformity with a given, harmless, domesticated type, uniformity of manners, views, and little desires; these were the ideals of Europe when Nietzsche focussed his attention upon it, and those Europeans who succeeded in realising these ideals really believed they had solved the problem of life.

With his vigorous and full-blooded teaching, Nietzsche disturbed the slumbers of the indifferent; he snatched the soft couches from under the religious ones, and to those who held, that the greatest good must be the total suppression of pain, he spoke thus:—"What

* G.E., pp. 125, 126.

is good? ye ask. To be brave is good. Let the little girlies talk: To be good is sweet and touching at the same time. Ye say, a good cause will hallow even war? I say unto you: a good war halloweth every cause.

" War and courage have done more great things than the love of one's neighbour."*

Over the so-called virtuous, he lashed himself into a veritable fury. He told them they were a vulgar herd whose one preoccupation was the comforting and the fattening of that herd. " Everything that elevates the individual above the herd, and is a source of fear to the neighbour, ye call ' evil,' " he said; on the other hand, " the tolerant, unassuming, self-adapting, self-equalising disposition, the mediocrity of desires, attain to moral distinction and honour " among you.†

Is it a matter for surprise, that, speaking thus, he was reviled by a Europe that was steadily dozing off in smug content?

We read in *Beyond Good and Evil :* " It is difficult and painful for the ear to listen to anything new; we hear strange music badly. When we hear another language spoken, we involuntarily attempt to form the sounds into words with which we are more familiar and conversant—it was thus, for example, that we modified " the French words *écrevisse* and *chaussée* into crayfish and causeway, and again the German *weissager* into wiseacre, because " our senses are . . . hostile and averse to the new."‡

* Z., " Of War and Warriors." † G.E., pp. 124, 125.
‡ G.E., p. 113.

On his own showing therefore, Nietzsche was not only disturbing, but also painful to the ears of his contemporaries. And among the people who wished, at any cost, to grasp him by identifying his philosophy with something they thought they already knew, we find those who call it Egoism * and Materialism.†

I hope to be able to show you it is neither the one nor the other. Dr Tienes, in an interesting little pamphlet ‡ calls Nietzsche the *Evolutions-ethiker*, the moral philosopher of Evolution, and the epithet is surely deserved; but, as Spencer very rightly observed: "The doctrine of Evolution, under its purely scientific form, does not involve Materialism though its opponents persistently represent it as doing so."

When Zarathustra came to preach to men for the third time, he looked for changes in them; . . . "he wished to learn what in the meantime had gone on with man, whether he had become taller or smaller," and much that he says in this respect will remind English readers of Mr Kipling's profound lines in the song entitled "Chant-Pagan":—

> "I will trek South and make sure
> If it's only my fancy or not
> That the sunshine of England is pale
> And the breezes of England are stale,
> And there's something gone small with the lot."§

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* Dr Dolson, *The Philosophy of F. Nietzsche*, p. 100.

† On this point see Spencer's *Collected Essays*, Vol. I. p. 386.

‡ *Nietzsche's Stellung zu den Grundfragen der Ethik genetisch dargestellt.*

§ Rudyard Kipling's *The Five Nations*, p. 162.

In the third book of Zarathustra's history we read the following account of his criticism:—

"All hath become smaller!

"Everywhere I see lower doorways. He who is of my kin, can still pass through them, but—he must stoop!

"I pass through these people and keep mine eyes open. They do not forgive me for not being envious of their virtues.

"They bite at me because I say unto them: 'For small people, small virtues are necessary,' and because it is hard for me to understand that small people are necessary!

"They cough when I speak; they are of opinion that coughing is an objection to strong winds.

"They divine nothing of the fury of my happiness!

"We have not yet time for Zarathustra!—they say as an objection. But what matter about a time that hath 'no time' for Zarathustra?

"Unto small virtue they would fain allure and flatter me. To share the ticking of their small happiness, they would fain persuade my foot.

"I walk through these people and keep mine eyes open. They have become smaller and are becoming ever smaller. And the reason thereof is their doctrine of happiness and virtue.

"And they are modest even in their virtues; for they are desirous of ease. But with ease only modest virtue is compatible.

"Here is little of man; therefore women try to make

themselves manly. For only he who is enough of a man will save the woman in woman.

"At bottom they desire plainly one thing most of all: to be hurt by nobody. Thus they anticipate the every wish of everyone and do well unto him.

"But this is cowardice; although it be called virtue.

"For them virtue is what maketh modest and tame. Hereby they made the wolf a dog and man himself, man's best domestic animal."*

With the gravest misgivings, Nietzsche thus beheld the condition of the modern Europeans. He saw how unexhausted mankind still is for the greatest possibilities, and he wondered how the race could be directed into channels of thought and valuations which might lead it to a prouder, more dignified, and higher state. For this purpose, he declared new philosophers to be necessary, new commanders—new valuers. Harder leaders than we have had heretofore must arise; their hearts must be of brass and their consciences of steel, that they may bear the almost crushing responsibility of directing a clever, crafty, surreptitious, comfort-loving and fearful crowd such as the present-day crowd of modern and satisfied Europeans. But such philosophers *are* certainly coming, they *must* come; he tells us their image hovers before his eyes!

Nietzsche's only fear is, that these coming leaders may miscarry or degenerate; his one anxiety, his one gloom is, that they may miss, or deliberately abandon,

* Z., "Of the belittling Virtue."

their way, discouraged or overwhelmed by the colossal dimensions of the task that lies before them.*

"A single individual, alas, only a single individual am I," Nietzsche cries despairingly, "and this great forest, this virgin forest" of errors, of prejudices and of petty, myopic immediate-advantage-seeking principles!

Oh, that I had dogs, assistants, scouts, to help me in my big hunt; but courage and sagacity are requisite for such a hunt, and scholars and all men who could assist me, are unused to danger nowadays. Where the great dangers commence,—"it is precisely then that they lose their keen eye and nose."†

"To entice many from the herd—that is why I have come. Folk and herd will be angry with me: a robber Zarathustra wisheth to be called by herdsmen.

"Herdsmen I call them, but they call themselves the good and the just. Herdsmen I call them, but they call themselves the fearful of the right belief.

"Lo, the good and just! Whom do they hate most? Him who breaketh to pieces their table of values,—the breaker, the law-breaker:—but he is the creator."‡

. . . . . .

We have seen how, for hundreds of years, Christianity had been the philosophical birthright, so to speak, of all Europeans and of all people like them: we have seen how, even the clearest minds, owing to their having been born into it, were led to regard it pretty well as a modern town-child regards the pavement in

* G.E., pp. 129, 130. † *Ibid.*, p. 64.
‡ Z., Introductory Speech, ¶ 9.

the street, that is to say, as a thing that is, that always has been, and ever will be.

We know what it cost the bravest and deepest thinkers to oppose Christianity, and we have read how they struggled rather to uphold than to subvert the old faith,—so tenacious are early and hereditary associations.

We have spoken of the many centuries, during which God was pictured as an autocratic power outside the world whose destiny he determined from second to second with all the caprice of a primitive tribal chieftain, and we watched the transformation of this idea into pantheism—the belief which placed God in the world, which made the world a manifestation of God's being.

The relations between man and this new God of Pantheism, it is true, were not so familiar, not so confidential, as the previous ones had been; but men could still honour and respect Him, and that is all that this new teaching demanded of them.

Still, even this view, broad as it was, did not entirely satisfy natural scientists. It was the latter's ambition to ascribe all phenomena to natural law. The thought of an interfering deity's underlying the natural world was discomfiting to them; it rendered their generalisations problematic. Otherwise, however, they were not unfriendly to a notion of God, and they and their followers therefore circumvented the difficulty by means of this really creditable stratagem:—God would still be upheld, and still be believed in, but He must be made innocuous in so far as their text-books were concerned;

He must be placed outside the world again. It would be admitted that He had created it, and that its laws were divine laws; but on this condition: that it would be thoroughly understood that God ceased to take any active part in the proceedings, once He had established their fundamental laws. This was Deism.

This belief accorded perfectly with all the needs of the time. It allowed of scientists prosecuting their researches undisturbed by fears of incurring stigma, and it enabled those among the educated classes, who were inclined to lend a friendly ear to science, to read learned works with a clear conscience.

Such, roughly speaking, was the state of affairs, when Kant approached the question of General Metaphysics, and, in dealing with it, killed it. The very existence of the God, who had been given so many different interpretations, was shown by Kant to be not even demonstrable. Kant not only showed that the God of the Christians could not be proved; but that the proofs of all Gods, all Metaphysics, were imperfect, impossible—impudent.

In morality, however, Kant granted an authority to human reason, which he denied it in metaphysics. Where morality is concerned, he believes in liberty, in the inexorable law of duty, in the necessary harmony between happiness and virtue, and, in this way, he practically committed himself to the re-establishment of those principles which the ones above imply, namely:—the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul. Metaphysics is not a possible science, let us, however,

abide by what we have already been given in this respect. Revealed religion is already with us; it may be needful for us to have such a religion; in any case, it is a comfort: let us tolerate it!

Thus, Kant's uncompromising attitude towards Metaphysics, in theory, was followed by a compromise on his part, where practice was concerned, which materially weakened his position, and I hardly need tell you how eagerly thinking people availed themselves of Kant's high authority in order, once more, to give their whole minds and hearts up to the " right belief," as Nietzsche characterises it.

The flame of Christianity was fanned once more among the educated classes. And, in view of the eminent philosophical sanction it had suddenly acquired, was it not perfectly natural that it should as suddenly experience a period of enormous prosperity and support? Kant had shown that nothing could be certain in the realm of Metaphysics; why not, therefore, espouse the cause of that belief which had stood the test of years? Why not embrace the improbable provided it were superannuated?

This revival in the " true belief," however, proved to be but of a very transient nature. It gradually dawned upon Europe, that the blow levelled at Metaphysics was one that could be ill warded off, and a period of doubt soon superseded the inflamed return to Christianity. The belief in God, where it survived, was seen to have been considerably weakened, and hundreds of thousands had it no more.

It was then, according to Dr Ernst Horneffer, the late Director of the Nietzsche Archives, that a general discontent and hopelessness in the hearts of thinking Europeans, paved the way for what is now known as Pessimism.*

Sully, in his interesting work on the subject, rather seems to overlook the influence of godlessness upon the hearts of educated Europeans, in relation to the elaborate Pessimism which flourished in Europe in the early part of the nineteenth century and a little later.

There can, however, be little doubt, that the world without a God seemed strange and cold to those who were deep enough wholly to realise it in this altered aspect.

It will be said, perhaps, that Pessimism is as old as the ancient philosophers. This is perfectly true, and in the religion founded by Buddha, we have one of the most striking examples of early desperate views of life having been formulated into a system of Quietism, symbolised by the one doctrine of Nirvana. But the great pessimistic movement among Europeans of the nineteenth century certainly owes its origin to an impulse greater than that which can be sought in the influence of ancient melancholy. When, therefore, Dr Ernst Horneffer points to the cold and comfortless feeling of godlessness which sprung from Hume's, Kant's and their followers' teaching, I think we may safely go the whole way with him, more particularly when we remember, that Buddhism, itself, also denied the existence of a Creator and any absolute Being.†

* See *Vorträge über Nietzsche*, pp. 42, 43.
† James Sully, *Pessimism*, p. 38.

Now, as we have already observed, the world without a God seemed strange and cold, and men were unused to these conditions. They had become adapted to another environment, where prayers, hopes of after life, and fear of punishment after death, had reigned almost as fixed ideas. Suddenly bereft of these fixed ideas they had, as suddenly, become ill-adapted; and who means to doubt that Pessimism, in any form, is anything more than the expression of ill-adaptedness which does not recognise itself as such?

Responsibility had been laid on the shoulders of a divinity for centuries; it now seemed to lie very heavily indeed upon the shoulders of men. And, having relinquished all past interpretations of what people will persist irrationally in calling "the First Cause," they began to ask themselves: "What is this world? What is its object? What are we all driving at? If there be no God, no Heaven to go to, no Hell to which we may relegate our enemies; what, indeed, is the point of existence? Where, if you please, is the joke?"

It is no joke, Pessimism replied. It is a most ghastly reality, which we are here to endure, come what may. It is a most horrible torment which is in vain, which has no object, no sense, no explanation. It is the worst of all possible worlds, and in it we are suffering victims, without a hope, without an ideal, without even a justification for our pain! Godlessness is unspeakable—hideous!

Byron in England, Schopenhauer in Germany, Leopardi in Italy, and Mme. Ackermann in France: each of

these voiced the sentiments of those who were at their wits' end in a Godless world; while among those whose works, although not avowedly pessimistic, yet contain passages which betray a tincture of Pessimism, we find Lamartine, Heine and Carlyle.

There were many, however, who did not share these melancholy views. Although they had severed themselves from the Church, a large number, then as now, were totally and comfortably indifferent. Thousands smiled superciliously at Pessimism and lisped: " It will be all the same a hundred years hence! "

But the thinking world, the deep world, the world that looks for an object in existence, and will have an ideal after which it may strive—this world was in despair!

Now, Schopenhauer spoke to this world and taught it a doctrine whereby it might defy its wretchedness and steel itself against life's horrors. He, too, saw in a Godless world a pointless abomination; he, too, could see no excuse for the prevailing pain, nor any justification for the misery of the subjected and oppressed, and, overcome by his loathing of life and the universe, he inveighs against both with a bitterness which throws all other pessimists into the shade.

Nietzsche describes how an accident revealed Schopenhauer's works to him. He tells us how he chanced one day to come across a copy of *The World as Will and Idea*, at the old Rohn curiosity shop in Leipzig, and how something urged him to buy it, despite the fact that he did not usually decide in a hurry con-

cerning the purchase of any book. He goes on to describe, how, at home, immediately after the purchase, he dropped into a corner of a sofa, and began to let Schopenhauer's energetic and gloomy genius work upon him; he exclaims: " here every line cried out, renunciation, denial, resignation; here I saw a mirror in which I espied the world, life, and my own mind, depicted in frightful grandeur," and, he adds: "the need of knowing myself, yes, even of gnawing at myself, forcibly seized me."*

Nietzsche's sister, however, gives us the most striking description of her brother's attachment to Schopenhauer.

" Schopenhauer," she says, " was not a book for him, but a friend. The philosopher was already dead when my brother first became acquainted with his works, otherwise he would have journeyed to him immediately, in order to greet him as a friend and a father, for, throughout his childhood and youth, he had yearned for the fatherly friend whom he had missed so sorely, owing to our father's all too early death."†

But, we shall see that a radical and permanent change was very soon to manifest itself in Nietzsche's attitude towards his great teacher. Seeing, however, that he does not reject Schopenhauer's philosophy completely, but adopts all that he thinks is tenable in it, and thereon builds up his own teaching, a careful examination of Schopenhauer's views is now inevitable.

* *Das Leben Friedrich Nietzsche's* by E. Foerster-Nietzsche, Vol. I. pp. 231, 232.

† *Ibid.*, p. 280.

. . . . . .

In the year 1781, when Kant was well over fifty years of age, his world-renowned *Critique of the Pure Reason* was published. In this book, to the writing of which, as he himself assures us, he was incited by the scepticism of David Hume, he undertook the examination of the origin, extent, and limits of human knowledge, and unfolded his doctrine of the relativity of all knowledge. He tried to establish " the distinction between phenomena—whose substance is given us through impressions on the senses, but whose form is a purely subjective product of the mind itself—and real things or ' things-in-themselves,' which exists out of relation to time, space, or causality."*

He shows us, in this *Critique*, that what we call external objects are really only mental representations resulting from the nature of our sensibility. To us they are mere appearances, the inner nature of which we can never ascertain. The appearance of the things we know, the things-in-themselves, we do not and cannot know. Nevertheless, in opposition to Berkeley, Kant declares that although we do not know how, " we must assume that transcendental objects or things-in-themselves exist."†

Summing up the results of his demonstration of these views, in the *General Observations on the Transcendental Aesthetic*, Kant writes as follows:—" That the things which we perceive are not what we take them to be nor

* *Ueberweg's History of Philosophy*, translated by G. S. Morris, A.M., Vol. II. p. 160.
† *Ibid.*, p. 176.

their relations of such intrinsic nature as they appear to us to be; and that if we make abstraction of ourselves as knowing subjects, or even only of the subjective constitution of our senses generally, all the qualities, all the relations of objects in space and time, yes, and even space and time themselves, disappear, and that as phenomena they cannot exist really *per se* but only in us; what may be the character of things-in-themselves, and wholly separated from our receptive sensibility, remains wholly unknown to us."*

Greatly admiring Kant, and adopting many of his first principles, Arthur Schopenhauer as a young man of twenty-six years of age, deeply versed in the lore of Hindu antiquity, took up Kant's doctrine of the relativity of our knowledge, and developed it in his principal work, *The World as Will and Idea*, by attempting to show that, although the world is only our notion—our idea, if we regard another aspect of it, we can actually arrive at a knowledge of things in themselves; we can learn the inner nature of external objects.

In what concerns our perception of the outside world, he adopts Kant's view, that we are totally unable to derive from our mental representation of it any knowledge whatever of it as it really is. The inner nature of external objects, in the process of imaging them in our minds, completely eludes our perceptive powers. It must be clear to everyone, says Schopenhauer, " that what he knows is not a sun and an earth,

* *Ueberweg's History of Philosophy*, translated by G. S. Morris A. M., Vol. II. p. 166.

but only an eye that sees a sun, and a hand that feels an earth; that the world which surrounds him is there only as idea, *i.e.* only in relation to something else, the consciousness which is himself.*

"No truth, therefore, is more certain, more independent of all others, and less in need of proof than this, that all that exists for knowledge, and therefore this whole world, is only object in relation to subject, perception of a perceiver, in a word, idea."†

But, he continues . . . "the inward reluctance with which anyone accepts the world as merely his idea, warns him that this view of it, however true it may be, is nevertheless one-sided.‡

"The consciousness of everyone is in general opposed to the explanation of objects as mere ideas.§ The objective world, the world as idea, is not the only side of the world, but merely its outward side; and it has an entirely different side—the side of its inmost nature—its kernel—the thing-in-itself."‖

How can we discover what this kernel, this thing-in-itself is? That was the problem Schopenhauer set himself to solve in his work, *The World as Will and Idea.* We have seen that we cannot arrive at this real nature of things from without. But, says Schopenhauer, we are objects in nature, we are things among things,¶ and of ourselves we have a special, second view which we cannot have of other things. Besides being an object of perception, the body of each individual is known to

* *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, Vol. I. p. 3. † *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 4. § *Ibid.*, p. 23. ‖ *Ibid.*, p. 39. ¶ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

him in its inner nature; he knows its kernel immediately:* and what is this kernel, Schopenhauer asks, which each can immediately perceive in himself? Is it not that which we call mind or spirit—that embodiment of Feeling, Volition and Intellect, which some call soul?

In recognising these several attributes of mind which we call Feeling, Volition and Intellect, have we not perhaps brought ourselves into the presence of the whole of our inner nature, our kernel,—our other aspect of the objects which we are?

Feeling, Volition and Intellect, however, are not the simplest expression of our inner nature. There is an attribute in us, which, according to Schopenhauer, must be the ultimate attribute. Let us examine Feeling, Volition and Intellect, under his guidance.

In the first place, he lets them fall into two distinct groups, of which Feeling and Volition are one, and Intellect and its derivative. Understanding, Reasoning and Thought are the other.

It used to be customary to allot Intellect the first place in a classification of our mental phenomena; but Schopenhauer denies its primitive importance. Again and again he tells us, " the intellect, like the claws and teeth, is nothing else than a weapon in the service of the will,"† it is " the lantern of the will," or " an assistant organ of the will."

In every blind force of Nature, Schopenhauer sees a

* *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, Vol. I. pp. 129, 130. † *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 166.

factor that cannot be accounted for by an appeal to intellect; in the early actions of animals as also in all functions of our body which are not guided by knowledge, a power is at work which has nothing in common with the Understanding or with Reason.

If we observe ourselves closely, we do, indeed, find that the distinction between the parts played by the group Feeling and Volition, and that played by Intellect, is more marked than we should at first suppose.

Examining Feeling and Volition, first, we are so struck by the way in which each of these necessitates the other, that we see no possibility of separating them. Every feeling we have involves an action of our will; for, if it be agreeable, we will have that which awakens it in us, whereas, if it be disagreeable, we will not have it active under any circumstances. Willing and feeling —how can they be thought of apart?* From the very dawn of our lives, they, as one phenomenon infallibly guide us to perform life-preserving actions without the very slightest assistance from the Intellect, which can only act upon acquired knowledge.

We may take it, therefore, that our inner life consists of these two sharply-defined mental attributes: the Intellect with its derivatives: Understanding, Reasoning, and Thought, and the Will which, as we have seen, covers Feeling.†

Now, are Will and Intellect equally important to us?

* *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, Vol. I. pp. 130, 131.

† In support of this view see Spencer's *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I. pp. 500-503.

Could one be shown to be more primitive, to be more essential to us than the other? As we have already implied, Schopenhauer answers yes, in favour of Will.

The intellect is an instrument, a mere means in the service of the will. We desire, we want, we will have something, hence our intellect is employed, that this desiring, this wanting, this willing, may be stilled. Our passions, our love, hate, and physical appetites, are matters of feeling and will, and we certainly do make our intellect work, in order to find the means of ministering to them. But *they* are the primitive force, intellect is but their intermediary.

For a very long time, the intellect was thought to play the most important part in our lives. It is quite impossible, however, to retain that belief any longer. The ultimate factor in our existence, therefore, the thing-in-itself, which we have been seeking, is will;* for we cannot avoid giving intellect a secondary place.

Schopenhauer then proceeds to invest everything about us with will. " It is the inmost nature, the kernel of every particular thing, and also of the whole."†

And what is this will, which is the hidden spring of all existence? Schopenhauer calls it the blind " Will to Live."

Everywhere, among creatures that are driven by this blind will, he sees warfare, oppression, suffocation, maiming, torture, misery. The weeds stifle the noble and useful plants, these again exhaust the nourishment

* *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and Kemp, Vol. I. p. 136. † *Ibid.*, p. 143.

of the weeds. A mighty oak is here fettered and interlaced by a gigantic, wild vine, in whose fatal embrace it at last withers as if choked.* Elsewhere we see magnificent trees burgeoning and flourishing in the rays of the sun in spring, and preventing the quickening light from reaching struggling shrubs which try to eke out an existence at their feet. " Everywhere, in Nature, we see strife, conflict and alternation of victory.† This universal conflict becomes most distinctly visible in the animal kingdom . . . for each animal can only maintain its existence by the constant destruction of some other. Thus the will to live, everywhere preys upon itself, and in different forms is its own nourishment; till, finally, the human race, because it subdues all the others, regards Nature as a manufactory for its use."‡

" But an optimist bids me open my eyes and look at the world, how beautiful it is in the sunshine, with its mountains and valleys, streams, plants, animals, etc. etc. . . . Is the world then a raree show? These things are certainly beautiful *to look at*, but to *be* them is something quite different.§

" And, to this world," Schopenhauer exclaims, " to this scene of tormented and agonised beings, who can only continue to exist by devouring each other; in which, therefore, every ravenous beast is the living grave of thousands of others, and its self-maintenance is a chain of painful deaths; and in which the capacity for feeling pain increases with knowledge, and there-

* *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, Vol. I. p. 193.
† *Ibid.*, p. 191.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 192.
§ *Ibid.*, Vol. III. p. 392.

fore reaches its highest degree in man, a degree which is the higher, the more intelligent the man is; to this world it has been sought to apply the system of optimism, and demonstrate to us that it is the best of all possible worlds! The absurdity is glaring! "*

Schopenhauer turns in horror from the world he thus depicts. This shambles in which the blind Will to Live reigns like an evil and blood-thirsty spirit, he cannot endure to contemplate. The sufferings of existence choke him; in the voice of Nature, he hears but an exasperated groan, in her smiles he reads deception, hoax, vanity. With man, he declares, the blind Will has reached self-consciousness. It is for man, therefore, to see that it may turn against itself in man—neutralise itself in him. By means of renunciation, asceticism, and the negation of Will, Schopenhauer tells mankind, this abominable record of pain, iniquity and injustice, which we call Life, may be arrested. Man's highest aim, therefore, must, at all costs, be the destruction of the Will to Live in the midst of Life!—the conversion of the shudder and quiver of agony into the stiff stillness of apathy, the transformation of misery into nothingness—nonentity—Nirvana!

. . . . . .

As Schopenhauer turned in horror from the world he depicted, so Nietzsche ultimately turned in horror from Schopenhauer. Gradually he learned to regard the hopelessness, the unmanliness, the effeminate surrender

* *The World as Will and Idea*, translated by R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp, Vol. III. p. 392.

to sorrow, and the cowardly despair under the weight of Godlessness, which underlay the philosophy of Germany's greatest pessimist, with indomitable hatred; nay—nausea. Slowly it dawned upon him that Schopenhauer's Nihilism was no more than a short-sighted misrepresentation of facts, an attractive deception on a large scale, prepared only for the weak, the spiritless, and, above all, the ill-constituted.

Now, ready as we may be to grant, that God and the Christian Ideal had hitherto, perhaps, been mankind's greatest thought, we cannot help attributing much of the pessimism which invariably follows their withdrawal from men's hearts, to the complete failure of past iconoclasts in providing an adequate substitute for the idols which they destroyed. Nietzsche, who was the descendant of a long line of clergymen, and whose piety, as a boy, had been the delight of his relatives, knew as well as anyone could know, what Christianity means to those who sincerely profess it; he did not need to be told that he who attempts to destroy this powerful Faith, may find himself the indirect author of more errors and consequently more trouble than the Faith itself could ever account for. He knew, therefore, as perhaps few knew, that those who sally forth against Christianity with the sword of destruction in one hand, must also be prepared to wield the magic wand of construction pretty dexterously with the other. Something stupendous must be offered as a substitute, something equally capable of enthralling the minds of men and women. We must have a treasure for our riches.

Nietzsche knew the vast beauty and power of the substitute he had to offer, he knew he came loaded with gifts for men; hence his good cheer, his exaltation; hence, too, the laughter with which he would infect us.

" God is disproved," he says; " but why despair on that account?

" God is a supposition; but I would have your supposition reach no further than your creative will.

" God is a supposition; but I would have your supposing limited by conceivableness.

" God is a supposition; but who would drink all the pain of that supposition without dying?

" Creating—that is the great salvation from suffering and alleviation of life.

" But what could be created, if there were Gods!*

" And when I cry: ' Curse all cowardly devils within yourselves who would fain whine and fold their hands and adore! '—They cry: ' Zarathustra is ungodly! '

" And so chiefly their teachers of submission cry. But in their ears I rejoice to cry: ' Yea! I am Zarathustra the ungodly! '

" I am Zarathustra the ungodly. Where find I my like? And all those are my like who give themselves a will of their own and renounce all submission.

" Ye become ever smaller, ye small folk! ye comfortable ones, ye crumble away! One day ye will perish—

" From your many small virtues, from your many

* Z., " On the Blissful Islands."

small omissions, from your continual petty submission!*

"I rejoice to cry: 'Yea, I am Zarathustra the ungodly!'"

Thus we see, that, far from deploring, Nietzsche actually applauds the news that God had been disproved. It might perhaps be said, speaking biologically, that he was one of the first among modern European thinkers, to become adapted to the idea of Godlessness, and therefore to feel hopeful, strong, nay—creative under its influence. In any case, he leaves us in no doubt regarding his reasons for rejoicing. He says, at last, my eyes can turn towards mother-earth; and seek their hope there! The plans I make, the things I do, will be of the earth; they will belong to no back-world or beyond, towards which all humanity has been squinting for centuries, with the result that it has neglected its life here. "God is dead," man is now responsible for himself; he must seek a goal in manhood; he is left standing alone; the spirit of fight is kindled in him; the nymph of sport and of self-reliance, nudges him that he may notice her and make her his most faithful handmaiden. He is now at liberty to find an ideal in this world, not in a back-world, a beyond; but here on earth, and this ideal he may now strive to realise and thereby improve his race. Odious comparisons are at last going to cease. This world, whatever its defects may be, is no more to be backbitten by people whose incredible lack of sporting instincts allow them to

* Z., "Of the belittling Virtue."

decry and caluminate the existing and the perceptible, in favour of the imaginary and imperceptible.

For the sake of his generation and the future, therefore, Nietzsche bravely denounced the friend and teacher, who had been all to him; the pessimistic point of view, even in a godless world, was distasteful to him, and he began a campaign against Schopenhauer's teaching, which, for bitterness and implacability, has perhaps never yet been equalled in the annals of philosophical enmity.

But he never forgot the debt he owed to the man he was opposing, and in Volume X. of his Complete Works we find the following tribute to Schopenhauer's memory:—

"Far be it from me to believe that I ever properly understood Schopenhauer; but through him I learnt to know myself a little better, and for this reason, alone, he has my deepest gratitude."

It must be remembered, that Nietzsche was not fighting Schopenhauer and his disciples alone; he was fighting an indifferent and sluggish Europe, which, he declared, was reclining and decaying lazily in a fool's paradise. People then, as now, were adopting and practising so-called virtues, not because they were the means to what he regarded as a higher development of society, not because they would lead to an ideal caste of men; but because they were wretchedly comfortable, above all, safe and, in any case, not discordant with the views of the majority.

In the midst of this expedient morality which was

devoid of any noble character, Schopenhauer's interpretation of Buddhistic Quietism had gradually begun to flourish "with almost tropical luxuriance"; the youth of Germany, in Nietzsche's time, mustered in thousands beneath Schopenhauer's banner, and the whole of Western Europe seemed to be a victim of the one monomania: that of seeking ease—smug ease, at any cost, to the neglect of all higher and worthier aims.

The view of life held by a very large class of Europeans of that time, whether they knew of Pessimism or did not, is admirably summed up by Schopenhauer in a discourse upon the Vanity and sufferings of Life. Here he tells us:—"Whatever one may say, the happiest moment of the happy man is the moment of his falling asleep, and the unhappiest moment of the unhappy that of his waking."*

This resigned doctrine revolted Nietzsche. In spite of there being no God, as we have seen, he recognised an aim, a worthy object in life. He saw noble goals which men could reach, without straining after the debatable requirements of a back-world, and without competing for very doubtful rewards. He therefore turned round upon the teacher to whom he owed most; because he had something better, greater and nobler to teach than Quietism. He had to show us that life had sense, significance and worth.

. . . . . .

* Vol. III. p. 389, *The World as Will and Idea.* Haldane and Kemp's translation.

Nietzsche adopts Schopenhauer's metaphysics and builds his teaching upon it.

He also regards blind Will as the motive force of the universe; but he does not think this will is a will to life, but, as we have already heard, a Will to Power.

"Wherever I found living matter," he says, "I found will for power, and even in the servant I found the yearning to be a master.

"Only where there is life, there is will: though not will to live, but thus I teach thee—will to power.

"Many things are valued higher by living things than life itself; but even out of valuing speaketh will unto power!*

"Psychologists should bethink themselves, before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength—life itself is Will to Power; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results thereof."†

Now upon this base, "the Will to Power," Nietzsche constructs a philosophy which, unlike Schopenhauer's, says "Yea" to life and blesses it;—a philosophy which presents us with an ideal compatible with man's great record, and one which gives us something worthy of acceptance in exchange for what it takes away.

Nietzsche is not blind to the suffering in this world, on the contrary, he sees even more deeply into it than his predecessors; but he is pleased with it; he blesses it too; for, in pain he sees the greatest educating and

* "Of Self-overcoming." † G.E., p. 20.

ennobling force of Nature. He who was a continual sufferer from cruel disorders, who had served in a German ambulance during the Franco-German war, and who, as a boy at school, had twice sought to temper his playmates' admiration for Mucius Scaevola, by severely burning his own hand in their presence,* was not the kind of man to meditate poetically about pain. What he says about it we can listen to with attention, we know it to be more than idle theorising. Now, again and again, in his later works, we find Nietzsche laying stress upon the value and necessity of pain; and it is not improbable, that passages of the kind I refer to † must have gone a long way, when misunderstood, towards earning the reputation of brutality for his philosophy, which so many in Germany, England and France are trying their utmost to keep alive.

" The discipline of suffering, of great suffering," says Nietzsche, " know ye not that it is only this discipline that has produced all the elevations of humanity hitherto? The tension of soul in misfortune which communicates to it its energy, its shuddering in view of rack and ruin, its inventiveness and bravery in undergoing, enduring, interpreting, and exploiting misfortune, and whatever depth, mystery, disguise, spirit, artifice, or greatness has been bestowed upon the soul, has it not been bestowed through the discipline of great suffering?‡ Profound suffering makes noble, it separates."§

* *Das Leben Friedrich Nietzsche's*, by E. Foerster-Nietzsche, Vol. I. pp. 105, 106.

† More particularly pp. 74, 75, 76 in *Genealogy of Morals.*

‡ G.E., p. 171.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

Elsewhere he rebukes all those who would fain attain to " the universal green-meadow happiness of the herd, together with security, safety, comfort, and alleviation of life for everyone," and who regard suffering " as something which must be done away with. We opposite ones," he adds, " who have opened our eyes and conscience to the question how and where the plant ' man ' has hitherto grown most vigorously, believe that this has always taken place under the opposite conditions, that for this end the dangerousness of his situation had to be increased enormously, his inventive faculty and dissembling power (his ' spirit ') had to develop into subtlety and daring under long oppression and compulsion."*

The fear and hatred of pain is paralysing, it checks the adventurous spirit. Just as the fear of losing may keep the vain man from playing a game, so the fear of suffering may keep many from playing a bold part in the game of life. But there are other reasons behind Nietzsche's praise of suffering.

How many among you have not already sought,—feverishly sought, perhaps,—to understand the Hedonists—those who attempt to base our morality, our good and evil, upon the feelings " pleasure " and " pain." Those of you who have done so, who have read, among other books, Sidgwick's somewhat tedious

* G.E., p. 59. Compare also Heraclitus, who says : " Homer was wrong in saying, ' would that strife might perish from among Gods and men ! ' He did not see that he was praying for the destruction of the universe ; for if his prayer were heard all things would pass away."

work, *The Methods of Ethics*,* his puzzling attack on Herbert Spencer's Hedonism,† and Spencer's equally puzzling reply; those of you, I say, who have done this, must very often have despaired of ever coming to a solution of the vexed question.

It is remarkable, that once an idea like that of Hedonism becomes thoroughly appropriated by one or two philosophers, it is almost certain to get buried and completely hidden from the view of the lay-excursionist into philosophy, thanks to the mountain of words with which those who are supposed to elucidate it, systematically smother it.

Any layman to-day, who, with the ingenuousness which characterises his kind, happens to inquire, "What is Hedonism?" or "Where is Hedonism?" will be told: "It belongs to Messrs So-and-So the Philosophers," or "Messrs Thingumbob the Logicians," as a matter of fact, though, only the mountain concealing the subject belongs to these gentlemen.

What is Hedonism? We may well ask: Why is Nietzsche so unfriendly to it,‡ and why does he speak so reverently of pain? Turning to an ordinary dictionary of the English language, after having laid philosophical treatises aside, it is quite a relief to find it described in one line, as "the doctrine, in ethics, that happiness is the greatest good."

* For a very interesting criticism of this work see Alfred Fouillée's *Critique des Systèmes de Morale Contemporains*, pp. 36-38.

† *See* W. H. Rolph's interesting attack upon Spencer in reference to the same subject in *Biologische Probleme* (Edit. 1884), pp. 50, 51.

‡ *See* G.E., pp. 118, 119, 170.

Now, if we understand what is meant by happiness here, it looks as if we knew all we wanted to know. How should we define happiness in this case? Happiness roughly speaking means that state to which we have attained, when we perform those actions which we are best apt to perform; in fact we cannot do better than to say, it means complete adaptation; it means that state to which an organism arrives, when it is in complete harmony with its environment. What happiness then means to the individual, may be still further defined; but, as this definition could answer no purpose here, we are glad to escape from the need of attempting it.

To proceed, and not forgetting that Herbert Spencer is careful to admit, that although happiness cannot perhaps be made the immediate, it *may* be made the ultimate aim of an action, let us turn to Nietzsche, and see what he says.

Nietzsche declares that there is a tremendous assumption underlying all Hedonism, and it is this: that the urging of a perfectly possible, complete adaptation to any environment, presupposes that this particular environment is a desirable one to become adaptated to. He points out that an environment may be unworthy of one's adaptating one's self to it; consequently, that complete adaptation to it would be a mistaken rather than a justified step. His attitude towards Hedonism is the attitude of the parent towards the lazy schoolboy. " Is it not too early in your life to be lazy? " the parent asks the lazy schoolboy. " Is it not too early,

yet, to preach Hedonism? "* is Nietzsche's question to us, and with it he practically states his objection to the teaching. Complete adaptation to our present environment, if it were possible, would undoubtedly, I suppose, lead to happiness; what has to be decided first, though, is whether we actually have an environment which really corresponds to the highest possibilities we are capable of, whether our environment is a desirable one, at all, to become adapted to.

Nietzsche's attitude towards pain is now, in a measure, explained.

Pain, as a rule, means adaptation which is faulty, incomplete or totally lacking. He conjures us, therefore, not to go out of the way of pain any more; nor to lose our patience under it; for, if we should do these things in spite of his warning, the catastrophe he most wishes to avert, might occur—we *might* become adapted.

The heroic attitude assumed in all his books is now more easily understood. His life, too, appears more transparent, if we wish to read this new meaning into it. But, what, above all, is understood, is his doctrine of the Superman; and with this word, we come to the fundamental question of his philosophy.

Of course, we know that this doctrine is purely hortatory; but what is its purpose? Its purpose is to give us the picture of a type to which we might attain,

* "Will it not always be too early to preach Hedonism?" is really his implied question; for there is no reason to believe that his Superman is intended by him to be the very ultimate development: hence, even complete adaptation, if it were possible, under Superman, will not be strictly in harmony with Nietzschean philosophy.

to which it is possible for us to attain, and after which he would have us strive. Its incidental purpose is to show us by comparison that our present ideals of manhood and womanhood are mean, unworthy of our great past, and certainly quite unworthy of all the powers which are still unexhausted in us.

The possibility of attaining to the Superman, is to be our warrant for pain; it is to be the significance of our refusing to adapt ourselves to existing conditions. Hitherto, we have had no meaning for pain. Superman is to be that meaning. Nietzsche had this one great advantage over his eminent teacher, Schopenhauer, namely, that when he approached the problem of the universe, Europe was already in possession of Darwin's great book, *The Origin of Species.*

It may be even said, that Nietzsche actually returned critically to Schopenhauer with the theory of Evolution as his scalpel. And he saw, then, what Schopenhauer could not very well have seen: That this long and cruel process of evolution, impelled by the blind Will to Power which spurs on all things, gave a meaning and an importance to life, which the notion of unalterable Being could not offer. He saw hope and promise in the thought that this world is a Becoming and not a Being, and, in revaluing Schopenhauer's Will to Live as Will to Power, he also revalued the Pessimistic Weltanschauung into one of the most thorough-going optimistic philosophies that has ever yet been taught.

Recognising, like Heraclitus, the eternal flux of things, Nietzsche says:—

" Everything goeth, everything returneth. For ever rolleth the wheel of existence. Everything dieth, everything blossometh again. For ever runneth the year of existence."*

Nietzsche in one sense was a Darwinian. All his later works bear the unmistakable stamp of the Theory of Evolution as taught by our most celebrated naturalist; but, although Darwin's teaching as to the " Descent of Man," with all its consequences, moral and physical, meets with Nietzsche's partial assent, the two philosophers differ seriously in respect of the question of means,—in respect of the question of the lines upon which the process of evolution worked. Nietzsche, however, is not alone in finding fault with Darwin's demonstration of the laws governing evolution, and, although he only transformed the " Struggle for existence " into the " Struggle for power," the alteration is one of such far-reaching importance and involves so many new aspects of the Development Hypothesis, that, as we have already seen, whether it be right or wrong, we cannot dispose of it at a breath, as a mere play upon words.

Evolution, therefore, in the widest possible sense of the term, Nietzsche accepted conditionally, as an explanation of the origin of species; but he did not halt where most naturalists have halted. He by no means regarded man as the highest possible being which evolution could arrive at. If the process be a fact; if things have become what they are, and were not always so;

* Z., " The Convalescent One," ¶ 2.

then, he contends, we may describe no limit to the aspirations of man. If it were possible for him to struggle up from barbarism, and still more remotely from the lower Primates, then, says Nietzsche, his ideal, his ambition should be to surpass man himself and reach Superman.

The raising of society to a higher level is Nietzsche's aim, the most profound Optimism is his philosophy.

"Dead are all Gods," he cries, "now we will that Superman live."*

He implores us to turn our thoughts from a Backworld, from a Beyond. He points to a task on earth, our ideal lies in manhood itself, we must aspire to the excellence of man.

"I conjure you, my brethren, remain faithful to earth and do not believe those who speak to you of superterrestrial hopes! Poisoners are they, whether they know it or not.

"Despisers of life are they, decaying and themselves poisoned, of whom earth is weary, begone with them!

"Once blasphemy against God was the greatest blasphemy, but God died, so that this kind of blasphemy died also. Now, the most terrible of things is to blaspheme the earth and to rate the importance of the unknowable higher than the significance of the earth."†

Nietzsche teaches us a new will, a will for the improvement of our race. Hitherto the ideal of most philosophers had been the happiness of the greatest number; Nietzsche rebukes those of his predecessors

* Z., "Of the Giving Virtue," ¶ 3. † Z., Introductory Speech, ¶ 3.

who held this view, and points out very reasonably that our aim should be the perfection of society, and that our morality and religion, if we have any, should be calculated to achieve that end.

" A new will I teach men: to will that way that man hath gone blindly and to call it good and no longer to slink aside from it like the sickly and the dying.*

" The most careful ask to-day: ' How is man preserved? ' But Zarathustra asketh as the only and first one: ' How is man surpassed? '†

" All beings [in your genealogical ladder] have created something beyond themselves, and are ye going to be the ebb of this great tide?

" Behold, I teach you Superman! "‡

The word " Superman," " *Uebermensch*," and the notion underlying it, were not quite new, when they appeared in Nietzsche's teaching. Novalis, Heine, Hölderlin, Goethe, and others, had already made use of the word, while Wilhelm Jordan, in his song entitled " Die Nibelunge," and Madame Ackermann, in a short and brilliant poem, " La Nature a l'Homme," written in 1876, are among the most striking examples of those in whom the notion of a superior being's superseding man, was a cherished ideal.

In addition to these, we have good grounds for supposing that even Charles Kingsley " believed that man, as we know him, is by no means the highest creature that will be evolved ";§ but whether he expresses the

* Z., " Of Back-Worldsmen." † Z., " Of Higher Man," ¶ 3.
‡ Z., Intro. Speech, ¶ 3.
§ *Herbert Spencer's Autobiography*, Vol. I. p. 408.

idea anywhere in his works, I am afraid I am incompetent to say.

It is Nietzsche's undeniable merit, however, as Dr Alexander Tille observes, to have led this new moral ideal to a complete victory.

Nietzsche puts the question to us very pointedly. He asks us what right we have, in the face of the Evolution Hypothesis, to regard ourselves as the *summum bonum* of humanity. Has Development come to a standstill with us? No, that is impossible. But there is such a thing as retrograde development; there is an ascending and a descending line of life; are we certain which line our race is following?

" Mankind does not manifest a development to the better, the stronger, or the higher in the manner in which it has at present believed. ' Progress ' is merely a modern idea, *i.e.* a false idea. The European of the present day is, in worth, far below the European of the Renaissance; onward development (progress, as it is understood to-day) is by no means, by any necessity, elevating, enhancing, strengthening."*

The law that " the fittest " survive in a given environment, does not by any means imply that the stronger or the better will survive, and our authorities for this apparently heterodox doctrine are no less than Prof. Huxley and Herbert Spencer.† I say " heterodox doctrine," because I am speaking popularly, and because I know that a very large number of people (the

* C.W., p. 243, ¶ 4.

† *See* also George J. Romanes' paper on "Darwin's Latest Critics," *Nineteenth Century*, May 1890.

late Dr James Martineau was among them), who have not gone below the surface of the Evolution Hypothesis, believe most fervently that the survival of the fittest must mean the survival of the better and stronger. But perhaps it would be as well to make the matter quite clear by referring to Herbert Spencer's and Huxley's actual words.

The former tells us in Vol. I. p. 379 of his Collected Essays, where he is replying to an attack made by Dr Martineau, upon the hypothesis of General Evolution:—

"... The law is not the survival of the 'better' or the 'stronger,' if we give to those words anything like their ordinary meaning. It is the survival of those which are constitutionally fittest to thrive under the conditions in which they are placed; and very often that which, humanly speaking, is inferiority, causes the survival. Superiority, whether in size, strength, activity or sagacity is, other things equal, at the cost of diminished fertility; and where the life led by a species does not demand these higher attributes, the species profits by decrease of them, and accompanying increase of fertility. This is the reason why there occur so many cases of retrograde metamorphosis—this is the reason why parasites, internal and external, are so commonly degraded forms of higher types. Survival of the 'better' does not cover these cases, though survival of the 'fittest' does; and, as I am responsible for the phrase, I suppose I am competent to say the word 'fittest' was chosen for this reason. When it is remembered that these cases outnumber all others—it will be seen that

the expression 'survivorship of the better' is wholly inappropriate."

And now turning to Professor Huxley's Romanes Lecture, we find these words: "there is another fallacy which appears to me to pervade the so-called 'ethics of evolution.' It is the notion that because, on the whole, animals and plants have advanced in perfection of organisation by means of the struggle for existence and the consequent 'survival of the fittest,' therefore men in Society, men as ethical beings, must look to the same process to help them towards perfection. I suspect that this fallacy has arisen out of the unfortunate ambiguity of the phrase 'survival of the fittest.'"*

Now what implied fact is common to the three passages I have just quoted from Nietzsche, Spencer and Huxley respectively? Nietzsche says:—

"Progress is by no means, by any necessity, elevating, enhancing, strengthening." Spencer says, "the survival of the fittest under the conditions in which they are placed, does not by any means necessarily signify that the better and the stronger will survive," and Huxley tells us, we look in vain to the struggle for existence, and the consequent survival of the fittest, to help us towards perfection.

Is it not quite clear from these three statements that the environment is the determining factor? If the environment is best met by mean, emasculated, puny and rickety beings, it follows that those men will be the

* *See* the Romanes Lecture, "Evolution and Ethics," by T. H. Huxley, Ed. 1903, p. 32.

fittest to survive who are mean, emasculated, puny and rickety.

The parasites in all their loathsomeness, we are told, are examples of the survival of the fittest, but were not those creatures much nobler, from which they were derived, and who unlike them were overcome in the struggle for existence? Is this point quite clear? Is it quite understood, that we may be the " fittest " and yet still degenerate, provided our environment be such that only degenerate beings may survive in it?

Nietzsche points to the moral inexorably. He shows us that our environment is not conducing to an elevation of man; on the contrary, the man who survives to-day, that is to say the average man who is happy and almost adapted to-day, must have qualities which promise nothing for the future of his race, except its belittlement. In the modern man, Nietzsche sees a sort of " Tomlinson "—Mr Rudyard Kipling's famous creation in the " Barrack-room Ballads ":—and, writing in very much the same spirit as that in which " the sublime Longinus " wrote in the third century A.D., and actuated by similar motives; at a time, too, when Europe seemed to be showing the same symptoms of degeneracy which his great Greek predecessor saw in his contemporaries of the Roman Empire, Nietzsche denounces and condemns " the pigmies " with whom, he says, he is " fatally contemporaneous "; he cannot regard them as the crowning glory of Evolution, and, with the words Mme. Ackermann put into Nature's mouth, he might well have sung to man:—

"Non, tu n'es pas mon but, non, tu n'es ma borne.
A te franchir déjà je songe en te créant ;
Je ne viens pas du fond de l'éternité morne
Pour n'aboutir qu'à ton néant.

. . . . . .

"Toi même qui te crois la couronne et le faîte
Du monument divin qui n'est point achevé,
Homme, qui n'es au fond que l'ébauche imparfaite
Du chef-d'œuvre que j'ai rêvé,

"A ton tour, à ton heure, il faut que tu périsses.
Ah ! ton orgueuil a beau s'indigner et souffrir,
Tu ne seras jamais dans mes mains créatrices
Que de l'argile a repétrir."*

With terrible earnestness, Nietzsche exclaims:—

"I teach you the Superman. Man is a something that must be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass him?"†

Like the true Evolutionist that he was, Nietzsche would have us alter our environment; he would make it harder for us.

We are in the dangerous position of being, to a certain extent, able to create our own environment. This is the great temptation, the greatest temptation, perhaps, man has ever had—the temptation of making life too easy for himself, before he is sure that his unexhausted powers do not render it imperative that he should aim at a still higher development. The Hedonistic schoolboy who creeps like a snail unwillingly to school, does not know that there are latent powers in him, which it is the business of his education to draw out; consequently, his superiors, who know this, force

* See *Petite Bibliothèque Littéraire*: *Oeuvres de Mme. Ackermann, Poésies.*

† Z., "Intro. Speech," ¶ 3.

him to adopt the less pleasant course, and to work. But we who know, who have no excuse for our Hedonism, who have, rather, every reason to believe that Superman is within our power; we have but *one* course, any other means that we are deliberately shirking our work and blinding ourselves to our duty.

Let us try to rid ourselves of the superstition that lamp-posts have grown in the street, where morals are concerned. Let us take our stand Beyond Good and Evil. The truth in Morality, like the truth in everything else what does it mean to Nietzsche? It is this way he replies:—"Truth to me is what elevates man!"*

"Over ye virtuous, my beauty laughed to-day. And thus came its voice unto me: 'They wish to be paid in addition!'

"Ye wish to be paid in addition, ye virtuous!

"Ye wish reward for virtue, heaven for earths, and eternity for your to-day?

"And now ye are angry at my teaching that there is no rewarder nor pay-master.

"Nay I do not even teach that virtue is its own reward.

"Ye love your virtue as the mother does her child; but did anybody ever hear of a mother wishing to be paid for her love?

"It is your dearest self, your virtue. . . .

"But, to be sure, there are men who call the agony

* Nietzsche's Complete Works, published by Naumann, Vol. XV. p. 153.

under the whip virtue; and ye have hearkened too much unto their crying.

" And there are others who call the stultification of their vices virtue.

. . . " Others who walk about heavily and creaking like waggons carrying stones down hill, talk much of dignity and virtue,—their skid they call virtue.

" And there are others who are wound up like every-day watches; they go on ticking and wish that ticking to be called a virtue.

" Verily, these are mine entertainments. Wherever I find such watches, I shall wind them up with my mocking; and they shall even click at that.

" And again there are others who sit in their mud-baths [in their ruts] and thus speak out of their bulrushes: ' Virtue—that meaneth to sit still in the mud-bath.'

" We bite nobody, and go out of the way of him who seeketh to bite; and in all things we have the opinions we are given.

" And in this way almost all believe they share in virtue. At any rate every body would have himself to be an expert as to ' good and evil.'

" Zarathustra hath not come to say unto all these liars and fools: ' What know ye of virtue! What could ye know of virtue! '

" But that ye, my friends, may become weary of the old words which ye have heard from fools and liars."*

The modern European, this " gregarious animal,"

* Z., " Of the Virtuous."

this " ludicrous species," this " something obliging, sickly " and " mediocre,"—this modern European; a man of Progress and of " modern ideas," the fittest surviving, because he is small and debased and bereft of all nobility: this man fills Nietzsche with the gravest misgiving. He cannot think without terror of the individual that will ultimately be the fittest to survive in the conditions which we have created for ourselves, and to which we may yet become adapted, led thereto by a Hedonistic philosophy. Something tame, soft and sensitive, something harmless with a keen but timid " eye to the main chance," some abortion of man it will be; Nietzsche sees the day coming and its approach is only made the more probable, seeing that it is taking place under the cover of such veneering terms as Progress, Modernity, " equality before God," etc. . . .

With all the energy of his being, Nietzsche raises his voice against this degeneration of man; he calls to us earnestly to transvalue our values and change our conditions, that another kind of creature may survive in the " struggle for power."

" I teach you Superman. Man is something that must be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass him?

" What is the ape unto man? A laughing-stock, a thing of shame. Man shall be the same for Superman, a laughing-stock, a thing of shame.

" Ye have made your way from worm to man and much within you is still worm.

" He who is the wisest among you is but a hidden

mutiny and a hybrid of plant and ghost. But, do I order you to become ghosts or plants?

"Behold, I teach you Superman!"*

But Superman must take a very heavy load upon his shoulders; a load of filth mostly; for, during our tenancy of the World, we have not helped to make it spick-and-span. He will have to have a healthy stomach too, this higher individual, that it may not turn when he looks back and contemplates our filthiness; when he looks back and tries to bury our filthiness!

"Verily a muddy stream is man. One must be at least a sea to be able to absorb a muddy stream without becoming unclean.

"Behold, I teach you Superman: he is that sea, in him your great contempt can sink.

"Where is the lightning to lick you with its tongue? Where is that insanity with which ye ought to be inoculated?

"Behold, I teach you Superman: he is that lightning, he is that insanity."†

Nietzsche perceived "all that could still be made out of man, through a favourable accumulation and augmentation of human powers and arrangements;" he knew "how unexhausted man still is for the greatest possibilities, and how often in the past, the type man has stood at mysterious and dangerous crossways, and has launched forth upon the right or the wrong road, impelled merely by a whim, or by a hint from the giant

* Z., "Int. Speech," ¶ 3. † *Ibid.*, ¶ 3.

'Chance.'" He knew what trifling obstacles have often shattered "promising developments of the highest rank," and owing to what quibbles, saviours of mankind have often been sacrificed. "The universal degeneracy of mankind," he adds, "to the level of the 'man of the future'—as idealised by the Socialistic fools and shallow-pates—this degeneracy and dwarfing of man to an absolutely gregarious animal (or as they call it, to a man of 'free society,') this brutalising of man into a pigmy with equal rights and claims, is undoubtedly possible! He who has thought out this possibility to its ultimate conclusions, knows another loathing unknown to the rest of mankind, and perhaps also, a new mission!"*

But disciples of Nietzsche may ask, who is this Superman? What is he like? How are we to picture this ideal after which we are to strive? Nietzsche cannot hope to describe and does not attempt to give us, any definite image of the Superman. He is to be an evolution of the higher men of the present day, he is a prophecy that Nietzsche bade the world strive to realise, he is a promise which Nietzsche exhorted us to keep for him.

How could he describe a development not yet reached? Here and there in his works we get glimpses of what Superman was to his imagination, and, by analogy of the past, he certainly could claim to form some rough sort of notion of the kind of being his table of morals and his principles of Sociology would rear. An

* G.E., pp. 130, 131.

excellent and tentative analysis of his forerunner's necessary attributes, which I regret to say I cannot quote here, occurs in the Winter Number 1906 of Mr Thomas Common's brilliant little Quarterly, *The Good European Point of View*. In any case, we may say that the Superman's first virtues must be uprightness and truthfulness; he must be courageous to the point of hardness, and his giving, if he give at all, his charity, if he be charitable, must not be the outcome of pity, but the consequences of an impulse generated by a superabundance of power.

Gifted with a sublime intellect,* and free—free in the sense that he have the Will to be responsible for himself †—he will be able to rule, not because he will but because he must,‡ he will be possessed of the "genius of the heart, which imposes silence and attention on everything loud and self-conceited, which smooths rough souls and makes them taste a new longing—to lie placid as a mirror that the deep heavens may be reflected in them;—the genius of the heart, which teaches the clumsy and too hasty hand to hesitate and to grasp more delicately; which scents the hidden and forgotten treasure, the drop of goodness and sweet spirituality under thick dark ice, and is a divining-rod for every grain of gold, long buried and imprisoned in mud and sand; the genius of the heart, from contact with which everyone goes away richer; not favoured or surprised, not as though gratified and oppressed by the good things of others; but richer in himself, newer than be-

* C.W., p. 340. † *Ibid.*, p. 202. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 341.

fore, broken up, blown up, and sounded by a thawing wind; more uncertain perhaps, more delicate, more fragile, more bruised, but full of hopes which as yet lack names, full of a new will and current, full of a new ill-will and counter current."*

This possible demi-god, leading men because he is a leader, and followed by men loyally, without a murmur of " why " or " how," because they cheerfully acknowledge, not only that some are born to follow, but that unlimited confidence is the highest form of reverence for one who deserves reverence at all; this knight of intellect and will, regarding the interests, the true interests, of his fellows, as more sacred than his own, and determined that errors of thought and judgment will no more be allowed to return, in order, for the thousandth time, to botch the figure " Man "; this " world-approving, exuberant and vivacious man, who has not only learnt to compromise and arrange with that which was and is, but wishes to have it again, as it was and is, for all eternity insatiably calling *da capo*, not only to himself, but to the whole piece and play ":† this, if I am not mistaken, is a faint forecast of Nietzsche's Superman; it was with this ideal in his thoughts that he called our present state the momentous Noon —the great Mid-day of man; it was for this belief that he would have us live and die.

Naturally, he looks upon us as but very remote steps to this ideal; but he conjures us not to think meanly of our position and its heavy responsibility.

* G.E., pp. 260, 261. † *Ibid.*, p. 74.

" Man is a rope slung between animal and Superman, —a rope over an abyss.

" A dangerous crossing, a dangerous half-way station, a dangerous looking backward, a dangerous shivering and halting.

" What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what can be loved in man is that he is a transition and a destruction.*

" It is time for man to mark out his goal. It is time for man to plant the germ of his highest hope.

" His soil is still rich enough for that purpose. But one day that soil will be impoverished and tame, no high tree being any longer able to grow from it."†

He was only too well aware of the impossibility of appealing to the many with a doctrine such as this. " They understand me not," he says, " I am not the mouth for these ears." Hedonism is far more to their taste, much more simple, and above all, much more pregnant with immediate advantages.

Nietzsche professes to appeal to those deep ones, whose ears are delicate enough to hear a jarring note in the sensational music of modern progress; to those who are discerning enough to guess at the humbug underlying the tinsel of " modern ideas "; in short he would fain appeal to those deep and refined ones, who constitute the few and the select, and who already know, in their innermost hearts, that all is not above-board with man.

" A thousand paths there are which have never yet

* Z., " Int. Speech," ¶ 4. † *Ibid.*, ¶ 4, 5.

been walked, a thousand salubrities and hidden islands of life. Unexhausted and undiscovered, are still man and man's world.

" Awake and listen, ye lonely ones! From the future winds are coming with a gentle beating of wings, and there cometh good tidings for fine ears.

" Ye lonely ones of to-day, ye who stand apart, ye shall one day be a people: from you who have chosen yourselves, a chosen people shall arrive: and from it Superman.

" Verily, a place of healing shall earth become! And already a new odour lieth around it, an odour which bringeth salvation—and a new hope.*

" Never yet Superman existed. I have seen them, both naked, the greatest and the smallest man.

" Much too like are they still unto each other. Verily even the greatest one I found to be—much too human."†

To men Nietzsche cried: " Superman is the significance of this earth. Your will shall say: Superman shall be the significance of this earth."‡

To women, he said: " Let a ray of starlight shine in your love! Let your hope be: ' Would that I might give birth to Superman! ' "§

And in this last passage, where Nietzsche tells us in a simile, what he was and how we are to regard him, we get in a poetical form his concept of his mission.

" I love all those who are like heavy drops falling one

* " Of the Giving Virtue," ¶ 2. † Z., " Of Priests."
‡ Z. " Int. Speech," ¶ 3. § Z., " Of Little Women, Old & Young."

by one from the dark cloud lowering over men: they announce the coming of the lightning and perish in the act.

" Behold, I am an announcer of the lightning and a heavy drop from the clouds: that lightning's name is, Superman."*

* Z., "Int. Speech," ¶ 4.

THE END OF LECTURE II.

III

The Transvaluation of all Values

In the two preceding lectures, I attempted to deal with Nietzsche's newness—his originality,—first in regard to the question of modern European morality, secondly in regard to his ideal of man. Much that you heard must have seemed new, even to outlandishness—even to eccentricity—to you. Now, however, I am approaching a side of his philosophy, the "Transvaluation of all Values," which promises, already by its very title, to transcend even the foregoing in novelty and originality.

In fact, it is not without great diffidence that one can venture to treat of this subject at all in a lecture. The views I have to lay before you will, at first, seem topsy-turvy.

One has to get acclimatised, even to new and strange thought.

But, so radically will these thoughts probably subvert your most deeply-cherished beliefs, that to hear them for the first time may mean to be shocked, to be offended, or even to be wounded, and there where you are most vulnerable.

In my last lecture, you heard what Nietzsche said of new music, new words, new effects of colour; you heard

that he declares them hostile to the senses; " We hear new music badly," he says. Need I point the moral?

What you are going to hear under the title, " Transvaluation of all Values," will be new music to you; not alone new music, but the instrument upon which it will be played, will be strange also.

Nietzsche was a new human instrument. A costly one whose sad end was proof enough of his fragility. No one who has studied his works deeply, can doubt that Nietzsche's breakdown was anything more than the snap of an organisation which was too highly strung for the conditions in which it lived.

He was a new instrument; he had eyes and ears for subtleties which most eyes and ears are too coarse for, nowadays. The music he gives us is new music; let us therefore be prepared to " hear it badly," remembering, however, to seek the fault in the proper quarter.

With this warning, I hope to secure you from that indignation and impatience which may blind you to the true merits of the views I now wish to present to you. The way I present them, I know to be full of shortcomings; but let this fact serve but as a further reason urging you to turn to his works themselves, for a better knowledge of their message.

No better opening could be chosen for this paper however, than that made by Nietzsche, himself, in the first book of the Transvaluation. Perhaps only too well aware of the reception his doctrine would meet with, he there writes in the following strain:—

" This book belongs to the select few. Perhaps even

none of them yet live. They may be those who understand my Zarathustra: . . . It is only the day after to-morrow that belongs to me. Some are born posthumously:

"The conditions under which a person understands me, and then necessarily understands,—I know them only too accurately. He must be honest in intellectual matters even to sternness, in order even to endure my seriousness, my passion. . . . He must have become indifferent, he must never ask whether truth is profitable or becomes a calamity to him. A predilection of robustness for questions for which, at present, no one has the courage; the courage for the forbidden; the predetermination for the labyrinth. New ears for new music. New eyes for the most distant. A new conscience for truths which have hitherto remained dumb. . . . Well then! Those alone are my readers, my right readers, my predetermined readers: of what account are the rest?"*

A thinker who writes in this way expects to be misinterpreted; indeed he deliberately courts misinterpretation. For he knows that it is one thing to understand, and something quite different to endure what one understands. "Every deep thinker," he tells us, "is more afraid of being understood than of being misunderstood. The latter perhaps wounds his vanity; but the former wounds his heart, his sympathy, which always says:—'Ah, would you also have as hard a time as I have?'"†

We may ask what it was that gave Nietzsche a hard time. True, he led a lonely life,—the life of an ascetic;

* C.W., pp. 239, 240. † G.E., p. 258.

he was also an invalid, and, to a certain extent an outcast against whom almost every hand was raised; but if we look into these facts concerning him, we find that they are rather the symptoms than the cause of his unhappiness. The cause of this unhappiness was in reality Nietzsche himself—the particular way in which he was constituted. His only alternative was to live alone, it was a foregone conclusion that he would be an invalid, and his contemporaries were compelled to raise their hands against him; simply because Nietzsche had no company, could find no health and possessed no real contemporaries in a world into which he had come, perhaps two or three centuries before his time.

Nietzsche was wretched because he was ill-adapted to his environment, he was an anchorite because he never succeeded in finding *the* friend, *the* equal, who *could* be company for him,—in the language of the biologist who could make him feel in harmony with his surroundings.

At the end of a very beautiful poem, entitled "From Lofty Mountains," he tells us that this actually was the case.

"O noon of life! A second youthful land!
Fair summer station!
O restless bliss in watchful expectation:—
For friends I wait—both day and night attend,—
For the new friends! Oh, come! The time's at hand!
. . . . . .
"This song is o'er,—the longings' sweet refrain
Ceased with good reason:
By charmer's spell, the friend at the right season,
The noonday friend—but why should I explain—
It was at noon when one was changed to twain. . . .

"We celebrate, now sure of conquering might,
The grandest lustra :—
The guest of guests arrived, friend Zarathustra !
The world now smiles, rent is the veil of night—
And marriage comes for darkness and for light." . . . *

Could any lines be more irresistibly poignant? After having sought *the* friend year in, year out, Zarathustra —his own creation, is the only guest he can tolerate at his table!

Elsewhere, Nietzsche tries to explain the nature of his sufferings, and we see perhaps more clearly still, that our view of the case is only too probable.

He tells us he suffered from man.

" Ye do not yet suffer enough! " he declares, apostrophising " Higher men." " For ye suffer from yourselves, ye have never suffered from man. Ye would lie, did ye say otherwise! None of you suffereth from what I have suffered."†

Nietzsche, by virtue of the very ill-adaptedness which was his bane, was practically in the position of a spectator at a play. He saw man as a looker-on sees all things, that is to say, he saw most of the game.

But what time have we nowadays to think of man?

We think we propitiate the imaginary spirit of our race, from time to time, when we fling some of our victuals to the cripples, the good-for-nothings and the diseased that throng our neighbourhood; but mankind in general?—man as a species? Who has time to think of this question? Who has even a wish to think of this question?

* G.E., pp. 267, 268. † Z., "Of Higher Man," ¶ 6.

In the midst of all our bustle and hurry! our greed for comfort, our desire, ever to be on the safe side, Nietzsche arises like a warning figure of destiny and bids us look ahead. An artist with a very distinct taste of his own, his object is not so much to impose his taste upon us, as to make us feel sure that we are exercising *our* taste.

He leaves us in no doubt as to what we are; gives us a dazzling picture of what we might be, and exhorts us to accept his ideal or make another of our own.

With passionate emphasis he cries:—the "Earth hath a skin, and that skin hath diseases. One of these diseases, for example, is called 'man.'"*

For this passion, for this emphasis, Nietzsche has been scorned. We, of modern Europe, have given up talking in this way. Even in our arguments, the hypersensitive and the lovers of peace and smug ease, whisper to us, not on any account to be personal. Indeed, so suspicious have we become of him whose heart is in his convictions or his ideas, and who therefore speaks with vehemence, that we have grown milder, even than the mildest man in history—the Founder of Christianity. Christ certainly said: "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," but when in the presence of his most rancorous enemies, he, too, did not refrain from venting his passion; as witness his attack on the money-changers.

Nietzsche is nothing if not vehement in his appeal to us, and in England, above all, therefore, we are inclined

* Z., "Of Great Events."

to purse our lips. Even such an authority in criticism, as Professor Saintsbury, cannot help taking exception to Nietzsche's " reckless, uncontrolled, uncontrollable flux and reflux of mood and temper,"* and the learned critic more than once alludes, with grave expressions of fear and commiseration to a taint of dementedness,† which, in his opinion, most certainly peeps out of the pages of the German philosopher's works. How very easy such criticism is; how simple it is to point to madness in a man's work, when we have been told that he died insane!‡

To be philosophical at all, the prerequisite, hitherto, has been tediousness, longwindedness, dryness,—anæmia! In men whose writings savour of these things, in our Kants, our J. S. Mills, our Sidgwicks, we have faith.

Now Nietzsche is a man who wrote with his blood, who made philosophy as palpitatingly interesting as the most thrilling romance, who himself said, he had no particular wish to be read at present, whose ambition was to create " things on which time might vainly try its teeth,"§ and who, as we have already seen, endeavoured to " say in ten sentences what everyone else says in a whole book,—what everyone else does *not* say in a whole book."‖

At this man, the orthodox and lovers of tradition,

* *A History of Criticism*, Vol. III. p. 586.
† *Ibid.*, pp. 584, 585, 586.
‡ On this point see Raoul Richter: *Friedrich Nietzsche, Sein Leben und sein Werk*, pp. 79-86.
§ C.W., p. 221. ‖ *Ibid.*

with Professor Pringle Pattison in the van, immediately foam with indignation; he is new music to them, he is not tedious;—they are at sea! And these people who worship dry land, dry books and dry ideas, insist on it, that they must be bored when reading philosophy, otherwise the self-castigating element in their studies, which is their measure of the latter's depth, is felt to be entirely wanting.

"Do not forget," says Nietzsche, "the higher we soar, the smaller we appear to those who cannot fly."*

This is not an aphorism for the sake of an aphorism, it is a thought expressing the experience of his whole life.

His eyes were constantly upon his fellows; mankind becomes self-conscious,—blushes even, when reading his works. The steady, critical gaze is sometimes too piercing;—hence, perhaps, the hatred he has roused and the opposition he has provoked.

"Towards my goal I struggle, mine own way I go, I shall overleap those who hesitate and delay. Let my way be their destruction."†

"I am a railing alongside the stream; whoever is able to seize me, may seize me. Your crutch however I am not."‡

Nietzsche was a critic, above all. Even Professor Saintsbury admires him in a lukewarm fashion in this capacity. Nietzsche bids us look around. He criticises the whole of modern culture, and the keynote of his indictment is, that we are all decadent. We have seen

* D.D., p. 386. † Z., "Int. Speech," ¶ 9.
‡ Z., "Of the Pale Criminal."

that the survival of the fittest does not by any means signify the survival of the more desirable or even tolerable, if we give to these words anything like their ordinary meanings. Given the necessary conditions, and the survival of the fittest might signify the survival of the meanest, most abject and most contemptible type, according to our present notions.

We create our conditions by means of our values of Good and Evil. Now are the conditions we have created leading to a goal which would answer to our present acceptation of what is dignified or worthy of our inheritance? Is it our taste that the man of the future be nobler, better-constituted, and stronger than he is at present, or that he be mean, deformed—ignoble?

Nietzsche assures us that decadence is the only possible, ultimate end of our present values. In fact he already sees decadence in a hundred different manifestations about us to-day, and he implores us to alter our values, before it is too late. " It is time for man to mark out his goal. It is time for man to plant the germ of his highest hope.

" His soil is still rich enough for that purpose."*

" Not only the reason of millenniums—but also their madness breaketh out in us. Dangerous it is to be an heir."†

But, how, you may ask, are we to determine new values? As we saw in my first paper, Nietzsche gives us the key. He says, not the prevalence of a certain moral principle is of importance in estimating its worth; but

* Z., " Int. Speech," ¶ 5. † Z., " Of the Giving Virtue," ¶ 2.

its origin. Let that be our rule throughout our investigation of the values which reign to-day, and it will be seen, how few may be retained, if our taste happen to coincide with Nietzsche's.

Morality, in all its forms is merely a means to self-enhancement and to power. This life is will to power. But, if we grant this, as we saw in the first paper, we also grant by implication, that not only the actually powerful, but also the impotent, the oppressed, the ill-constituted, the defeated, will struggle for power too. What did we say would be the result, suppose each of these classes moralise? Would not the powerful, the happy, the healthy, the well-constituted, probably posit health, power, strength, well-constitutedness as " good "; and is it not also likely that the impotent, the weak, the diseased and the ill-constituted would regard exactly those attributes as evil—as their evil?

Life means struggle, battle—war. Where it ceases to be that, its standard falls;* it degenerates. The attacks that life survives, as a rule, leave it stronger. Even, to-day, we carry on a sort of bloodless war with the weapons which our professions or trades place in our hands.

But fight entails exertion and fatigue; to the weak, the ill-constituted and the defeated, however, it is unbearable fatigue, insufferable exertion. What will they, therefore, probably regard as an ideal of blessedness? With their pale hands on their panting breasts, will they not cry for peace, love, love for one's neighbour;

* G.E., p. 235 *et seq.*

yes, even love for one's enemy? Will they not say: peace is good, love is good, love for one's neighbour is good; yes, even love for one's enemy is good? Is not this morality distinctly redolent of the weary of the fight, of the wounded of the fight, of the incapable of the fight? Will not health, happiness, power, prosperity, be regarded by them with revengeful eyes?

Let this suffice as introduction. Let it suffice to show the sound psychological basis upon which Nietzsche builds his two moralities: the master- and the slave-morality, and let us be prepared for the somewhat heterodox conclusions which an admission of these views carries with it.

For, however eager we may be to follow Nietzsche, we may find ourselves so mercilessly assailed by his doctrines, and called upon at every turn to relinquish so many of our most cherished ideals, that we must not be surprised to find ourselves hesitating at first, even to listen—even to see clearly—even to think fairly.

"Verily, I have taken from you an hundred words and the dearest playthings of your virtue; and now ye are angry with me as children are.

"They played on the seashore,—then came a wave and swept all their toys away into the depths: now they cry.

"But the same wave shall bring them new playthings and spread before them new coloured shells.

"Thus they will be comforted; and like them, ye also, my friends, shall have your comfort and new-coloured shells.

*" Thus Spake Zarathustra."**

. . . . . .

Nietzsche did not allow his mother ever to peep into one of his books. The old lady died without having read a line of her son's philosophical writings.† Was he going to let his mother have as hard a time of it as he had? Apparently not. He left his mother with her illusions concerning life. She had fulfilled her task on earth; her life was an already accomplished one when he began to write; why should he disturb her calm serenity? Why embitter her against her world seeing that she had but her autumn to spend in it?

Nietzsche does not appeal to those whose life-task is accomplished. He quite well realises that few men have the courage, even if they had the conviction, to turn upon their past selves, and recant all they have said and done. It is vain to expect it of them—more particularly in a world which still obstinately regards any revulsion of feeling or change of opinion as a sign of weakness.‡

Nietzsche appeals to the young; to those who have their lives before them. His speech on marriage in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* is perhaps the finest thing on the subject in the whole of the world's literature. He elevates marriage, not virtually, but actually, to the most sacred place among human institutions. He regards the married couple as pledges for the future of humanity.

* Z., " Of the Virtuous."

† *Das Nietzsche Archiv, Seine Freunde und Feinde*, by E. Foerster-Nietzsche, p. 18.

‡ In this respect see Professor Saintsbury's concluding words in his remarks upon Nietzsche, p. 586, Vol. III., *History of Criticism.*

The words of St Paul on the subject, which I do not like even to quote here, revolt him;* to him, marriage is not a last shift, a *faute-de-mieux*, this view of it fills him with disgust;† for it overlooks the main object of the institution, which is the pledge for the future of the human race.

He says rather:—

"Thou art young and wishest for child and marriage. But I ask thee: art thou a man who darest to wish for a child?

"Art thou the victorious one, the self-subduer, the commander of thy senses, the master of thy virtues? Thus I ask thee.

"I would that thy victory and freedom were longing for a child. Thou shalt build living monuments unto thy victory and liberation.

"Thou shalt build beyond thyself. But first thou must be built thyself square in body and soul.

"Thou shalt not only have descendants, but these shall also be thy ascent! Therefore the garden of marriage may help thee!

"Thirst unto the creator, an arrow and longing for Superman: say, my brother, is that thy will unto marriage?

"Holy I call such a will and such a marriage."‡

* Seeing that St Paul, with the words referred to, was speaking to men (the Corinthians) who were undeniably base and depraved, perhaps it is unfair to regard his attitude as the essentially Christian attitude towards marriage. The reader is therefore begged to refer to the *Rituale Romanum*, and more particularly to the Church of England Book of Common Prayer.

† C.W., pp. 336, 337. ‡ Z., "Of Child and Marriage."

In what religion can similar words be found concerning the holy estate of matrimony?

Nietzsche appeals to the young and tells them the nature of modern decadence. He points to it everywhere, and through them hopes to overcome it. He writes in the *Antichrist*:—

"The problem I here put, is not what is to replace mankind in the chain of beings (man is an end), but what type of man we are to cultivate, we are to will, as the more valuable, the worthy of life, the more certain of the future.

"This more valuable type has often enough existed already; but as a happy accident, as an exception, never as willed. It has rather just been the most feared, it has hitherto been almost the terror, the reverse has been willed, cultivated, attained; the domestic animal, the herding animal, the sickly animal man—the Christian."*

Nietzsche sees two lines of life, the ascending and the descending. After a conscientious investigation of life in the civilised world, he arrives at the inevitable conclusion, that the descending line is almost the rule,and he makes no effort at concealment concerning his belief as to the causes which are at work effecting this state of affairs.

He tells us the morality of the weak, the ill-constituted and the slaves, is gaining ascendency over other and nobler moralities.

Our conditions are determined by our values, Nietz-

* C.W., p. 242.

sche strikes at these. He assures us that our values are precisely what we must alter. If man is to be a being worthy of respect at all in time to come, if he is not to be a semi-sick, listless animal, grunting and sweating under a weary life, as under a disease, then we must alter our ideals; if we will have another kind of man, if our taste is a man who is health, who is happiness and strength, and whose aspect will not make us entertain doubts as to the inestimable worth of life; then this revolution, this arresting of the decadent current of to-day, this " ascent " (in Nietzsche's sense), is only to be achieved by a Transvaluation of all values: by a Transvaluation of all modern values.

The envisaging of this " topsyturvification," as Professor Saintsbury calls it, presupposes at least a certain knowledge of our present values, and this leads us to the question, *par excellence*, which Nietzsche answered with most force, most novelty, and most courage. What are our present values? The reply is: they are Christian values.

However stoutly we may repudiate any active participation in Christian forms and pieties, however conscientiously we may disclaim all allegiance to the religion of pity; the fact nevertheless remains, that in our morality, in our appreciation of life, the principles we adopt are Christian principles.

Our concept of " good " to-day, is not the concept of good with which we fought our way from the beast, it is a concept of good which has come to us from some law-giver who, like all law-givers, desired to create a certain type of man.

This "good" has to be taught as something brannew to little boys, who at first, in spite of heredity, and before they have the poison of a guilty conscience implanted in them, are refractory to it. It is the Christian concept of good. Let us therefore turn to Christianity.

Before embarking upon this trying undertaking, however, it would be well to bear in mind what Nietzsche's position precisely was towards religions in general.

I suppose, no careful reader of his works has ever doubted, for one instant, that Nietzsche was a profoundly religious man; for to do so would be to mistake the whole trend of his thoughts. Indeed, taking religiousness to mean that attitude of reverence and awe before the inexorability and beauty of Nature, which is the salient characteristic of such ancient religions as that of the Sun-worshippers, Nietzsche's gift and feeling for it might even be regarded as exceptional, and one has only to recall his magnificent poem entitled "Before Sunrise," in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, in order to be convinced of the fact.

In addition to this, however, everywhere in his works we find the usefulness of religions extolled as a measure of discipline,* as a step to higher intellectuality,† as a means to invaluable contentedness,‡ and, in one place, we even find *that* man rebuked who can love any but a religious woman; while the gift of reverence, which may be regarded as a factor in the development of all higher religions, is, according to Nietzsche, a *sine-quanon* of the aristocratic sum of qualities.

* G.E., p. 80. † *Ibid.*, p. 81.
‡ *Ibid.*, p. 81. G.M., pp. 169, 170, 171, 172, 173.

We cannot therefore say that Nietzsche is anti-religious. As a matter of fact, he is very far from being so. But, loyal in everything to his aim, which is the excellence of man, he divides religions, like moralities, into classes according to the ideals they bid men strive after.

Not the legends, nor the questionable promises, nor the prodigious wonders of religions, are held to be of importance by him;—but as we might easily have guessed: their moralities. The morality of a religion is that part of it which stamps its whole character, because it is precisely that part of it which has as its object the creation of a certain type of man. The hopes, the little fairy stories upon which the warrant for its hopes are based, and the value of the claim which religious founders usually make, to having had their teaching revealed to them supernaturally:—all these things may be as preposterous and as absurd as can be imagined, Nietzsche pays no heed to them, and moves not a finger to expose them. What does concern him, however, is the kind of man who tends to become paramount under the auspices, and owing to the morality, of a given religion.

If the type be a desirable or a tolerable one, then, whatever be the absurdities of the religions rearing it, it is applauded for its taste. If the reverse be the case, however, no grandeur of rites, nor any exploitation of logic, can justify the religion in Nietzsche's eyes.

Now, turning to Christianity, let us ask ourselves what trait it has, which, to an inquirer indifferent as to

the issue, and partial only to facts, might be regarded as the most salient trait, as the very nose of the faith which all believers follow?

Is it not the positing of a beyond in contradistinction to a " here " to a " this earth "—to life? The denial, the calumny and the backbiting of this world together with the eulogy, the great promises of, and the conditions of admittance to, a world to come, every fair critic must surely regard as the *leitmotif* of the Gospels and other books of the New Testament.

" Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It cannot be said that the sentiment of this text is exceptional in the New Testament. And again: " He that loveth life, shall lose it: and he that hateth life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Nobody, I presume, will deny that this thought is the very kernel of Christianity.

And what are we to suppose this loathing of the world meant? How are we to explain it?

The healthy child romps, the kitten plays delightfully. Who can watch a healthy child or a kitten at play, and still maintain that they should hate life in this world?

They both say yea unto life most heartily!

" Unto the pure all things are pure. . . . But, I tell you," says Nietzsche, " unto the swine, all things are swine! "

" Therefore the enthusiasts and hypocrites, whose very heart hangeth down, preach: ' The world itself is a filthy monster! '

" For they are all of an unclean mind; in particular those who have neither quiet nor rest; unless it be that they see the world from the back,—those back-worldsmen! "*

In what class of mind do thoughts of bitterness and resentment against the world originate?†

Once they have originated, they spread, of course, like a plague; for we have only to glance around us to-day in order to see how few are really constituted to say yea unto life, innocently, heartily and consummately, as the healthy child does. It is, therefore, merely complicating the problem, to try and support the mistrust of life and of this world by pointing to those who, rightly or wrongly, now share it. The only question we can put in the hope of obtaining enlightenment is: what kind of mind first gave rise to the mistrust? St John and Schopenhauer, Buddha and St Paul: what influence is at work to make these men deny life? That is our problem.

When we hear: " The wretched alone are the good, the poor, the impotent, the lowly alone are the good; only the sufferers, the needy, the sick, the ugly are pious; only they are godly; them alone blessedness awaits;—but ye, the proud and potent, ye are for aye and evermore the wicked, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless; ye will also be, to all eternity, the unblessed, the cursed and the damned! "‡ When we

* Z., " Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 14.

† For an interesting suggestion concerning the answer to this question, *see* Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (Edit. Methuen & Co., 1896), Vol. II. p. 68.

‡ G.M., p. 29.

read: " Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

" Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

" Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth (!).

" Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

When we read these sentiments, how many sensitive listeners among us can help pricking their ears for a sound of the hoarse croak of impotence which is to follow them? What fine listener amongst us does not detect the Will to Power of the unfortunate, the weak, and the ill-constituted, behind these words? Does this interpretation require to be substantiated?

Who is likely to say: " It is God that avengeth me. . . . the Lord avenge me! " Let us ask ourselves honestly and uprightly, who it is who leaves his vengeance to a God or to a future time and must posit a hell for his enemies? A certain kind of man must have done it, once upon a time, in order to still a rankling hate. Was it the man who had power to chastise his enemy? Was it the conqueror or successful warrior in any walk of life?

If we have earnestly asked ourselves these questions, we are nearing enlightenment, we are beginning to perceive what type of man sought to preserve himself and even universalise his kind by means of Christian values.

God had taken many shapes in the minds of men.

But before he could be reduced to the mellifluous lower-middle-class deity which St Paul describes in the following passage, something must have happened to him; what was it? Nietzsche's answer is, that a type of men had appropriated and defined him, who, being in a low and mean position in life, perforce gave him those attributes which tended to honour and even to canonise their condition.

St Paul said to the Corinthians:—

"... Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

"... Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called:*

"But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; (!)

"And base things * of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea* and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

Is it not perfectly legitimate to inquire to what class of minds such words appealed, and what part of the community they were supposed to endow with power? Nietzsche thinks the question very pertinent, and he replies, that only the oppressed, the weak, the ill-constituted, or the slaves of any community could have

* τὰ ἀγενῆ really means—the low-born things.

felt the need of such words. These sentiments of St Paul are values involving the morality of two thousand years. What kind of values are they? Are they the values of a noble, an ascendant, a healthy morality, or those of a slave, a decadent, an unhealthy morality?

It is clear that no noble or powerful class invented them; no such class could have had any use for them. They appeal to those who are burning with resentment, to those who are impotent, crippled, diseased, or in any way physiologically botched, and who are tired and sick of the sight of the mighty, the happy, the well-constituted; that is to say, of all those on whom the future welfare of mankind depends.*

The resenting ones on earth, wrestling with their weakness, or disease, playfully, as with a friend, were also parched, as all humanity is, with the thirst for power. They also wished to universalise their kind. In their way stood the values of the noble, strong and well constituted. How could they make *their* concept of good and evil universal? That was their problem, and on its solution depended the attainment to power of the whole race.

The natural function of the strong is to discharge their strength. Not passive inactivity, but aggressive activity is their business.

* Olshausen observes: "The ancient Christians were for the most part slaves and men of low station; the whole history of the expansion of the church is in reality a progressive victory of the ignorant over the learned, the lowly over the lofty, until the emperor himself laid down his crown before the cross of Christ." (Quoted by Henry Alford, D.D., one time Dean of Canterbury. *See* his Greek Testament, Vol. II. p. 481.)

" To demand of strength that it should not manifest itself as strength, that it should not be a will to overpower, to subdue, to become master of, that it should *not* be a thirst for enemies, resistance, and triumphs, is as absurd as to demand of weakness that it should manifest itself as strength."*

But how did the weak, the ill-constituted, and the physiologically botched regard the matter? To them the natural discharge of strength on the part of their superiors in body or mind, was an intolerable persecution which threatened to jeopardise the universalisation of their class.

A discharge of strength on the part of a weak man, amounts to an affectation, it is an effort upon which he must concentrate the whole of his attention, and, even so, he does not necessarily succeed in showing strength. What, therefore, was the very natural conclusion of the weak man? Is it not clear, after indulging in introspection, that he must have held all manifestations of strength to be, not necessary, but voluntary?—Even on the part of the strong? Must he not have thought that the strong are at liberty to behave like the weak if they choose, and that if they do not, since the difference is voluntary, therefore it must be their deliberate choice, their fault,—their guilt?†

It only remained to teach the strong this Machiavellian doctrine, and the position of the weak would become secure.

Nietzsche then proceeds to show us that the weak,

* G.M., p. 44. † *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 46.

believing the strong free to be weak, if they chose, not only tried to cry "shame" to them for their strength, but, themselves, began to regard weakness as voluntary. Their weakness seemed to them, at last, a performance, not the inevitable outcome of their constitutions, but an act of choice and discernment, for which their taste, their principles were responsible, and the chasm between weakness and virtue was thus spanned; for the inability to retaliate, to mingle actively with their fellows, to have any contact with evil, to be impatient, proud and unjust, thereby became a thing self-willed, self-chosen, a deed, a desert.*

For this deliberate and virtuous choice of weakness, for their exaltation of their great asset—pity, they were chosen by their God to confound the things which were mighty. "Free will" was the necessary belief and instrument of these early weaklings, as it was the necessary belief of all tamers of the animal—man.

To Nietzsche, as we are now beginning to perceive, Christianity is the embodiment of all slave values. In all its principles, he sees protection, shelters, means to power, for the impotent, the sickly and the oppressed.

But in thus classifying Christianity as a religion based upon slave-values, Nietzsche once more opens that much-debated question, which Gibbon refers to with such a show of deprecation in the famous fifteenth chapter of the *Decline and Fall*;—the question whether the first Christians were mean and ignorant. For, if it can be proved that they were, then Nietzsche's conten-

* G.M., pp. 45, 46.

tion concerning Christianity although it does not rely on this evidence alone, may, at least, be said to be partly justified.

Unfortunately, this question, deeply interesting though it undoubtedly is, involves a discussion of so many authors' works, that to treat it even with scant justice, would mean to allot it more space than is here occupied by the whole of these four lectures, taken together. When this is borne in mind, and when we also remember that the solution of the question exacts a somewhat profound knowledge of the first two centuries of our era; and that, even then, a certain " cloud " of uncertainty will still be found to " hang " over the first age of the church, concealing those facts which are of the most vital importance to the point at issue; it will be seen, that the task of the investigator, is not only very far from being an easy one, but also that it is beset with peculiar and inevitable disappointments, thanks to the freedom with which the various authorities refute and contradict one another in the course of establishing their own particular beliefs. Now I make no claim to having investigated this matter adequately, neither do I pretend to possess that knowledge of ancient history, which would justify me in deciding arbitrarily either against or for Nietzsche's contention; I have therefore placed myself entirely in the hands of those English, German and French authorities who seemed to me to have made a conscientious inquiry into the points which are at issue.

In stating the result of my modest researches, my

object, therefore, will be not so much to establish Nietzsche's contention, as to show you, that if he is sinning at all in making it, he is at least sinning in very good company.

To begin with, therefore, let it be said at once, that for Nietzsche's contention that Christian values are those of a slave, decadent, or resentment-morality, the evidence from various quarters is exceedingly strong.

Albeit, no attempt shall be made here to present the argument in its favour as strongly as possible, because there seems to be no need to attach such wonderful importance to it, and for reasons which will be given later. In any case, though, the attitude of some well-known authorities may prove interesting, and to these it will now be our business to turn.

Remembering that men of letters and of high society in Rome, of the second century, either did not know Christianity, or knew it exceedingly badly, and, therefore, that in spite of Tacitus, Suetonius, Juvenal, the younger Pliny, Plutarch, Lucian, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, our information is comparatively scanty on the subject, and in any case but for the famous letter of the younger Pliny, not very important; if we turn to the results of modern research, we shall find many serious attempts at grappling with our problem.

Taking Gibbon first, how many, who have read his fifteenth chapter of the *Decline and Fall*, have found any reason to doubt what his attitude really was regarding the question? Beneath his irony we do indeed read

dislike, and his sneers rather make us halt with surprise, seeing that he set out with the view of making "a candid but rational inquiry." But setting aside the tone in which he writes, a tone which, as Mr Bury points out, would have been altered by force of circumstances, had he been writing in our own time, in which "a wide diffusion of unobtrusive scepticism among educated people . . . seems to render offensive warfare superfluous,"* does anyone suppose that his attitude towards the single question of the alleged low status of early Christians would have altered? We shall see that the opinion of other writers, and even, of Mr Bury himself, do not justify our assuming this. Allowing, therefore, as fully as we can, for the peculiar influences and deficiencies of the time in which he wrote, we still cannot entirely overlook, in an historian like Gibbon, the value to Nietzsche's contention, of such passages as those, in which he refers to the "humble and obscure followers of Christ,"† or to the "pusillanimous sentiments of the new sect,"‡ or in which he explains the readiness of early Christians to believe in a beyond or a back-world, in words very similar to Nietzsche's.§

Turning to Merivale we certainly meet with a valiant attempt to elevate the status of primitive Christians; but the best even he can do for them, is to raise them

* Introduction to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* (Methuen & Co., 1896), Vol. I.

† *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Methuen & Co. 1896), Vol. II. pp. 81 and 82. *See* also Milman, *The History of Christianity*, Vol. I. p. 419, and Vol. II. p. 156.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 39. § *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 56, 68.

to the rank of a certain " middle class,"* of which he gives us but the vaguest description.

Hermann Schiller, writing a retrospect of the years preceding 117 A.D., brings Nietzsche's contention considerable support. He says the proofs upon which the belief is based that members of the higher and more cultivated circles of Roman Society lent an ear to Christianity, are still exceedingly unreliable, and even the Christianity of men and women attached to the imperial family may be held to be as little proved, as a persecution of Christians, as Christians, through Domitian, may be said to be proved. " Still," he continues, " even if it could be demonstrated, beyond a doubt, that members of the higher classes did belong to the new religion, the fact would not be of great value, since it could only be established in regard to very isolated and exceptional cases."†

He then proceeds to go into other evidence, for which there is no room here, but which is all in perfect harmony with Nietzsche's views.

Duruy brings overwhelming facts in support of Nietzsche's side. He speaks of the Mosaic God—the implacable and jealous master of a privileged race, being turned by Jesus into the universal God of the poor and the afflicted.‡ He also describes the early Christians at Rome, as " converts made among the poor,"§ as people "living in hovels,"‖ he speaks of their

* *History of the Romans under the Empire.*

† *Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit.* Erster Band, 2 Teil. pp. 577, 578.

‡ *Histoire des Romains*, Vol. III. p. 559

§ *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 504.

‖ *Ibid.*

clothes as consisting mainly of rags *—of their sect, as being despised and therefore treated mostly with indifference by the higher classes,† of Christianity as spreading in the mob which is inaccessible to philosophers.‡

In a retrospect of the years preceding 180 A.D. he says: "For a long time the Faith had spread only among the lowest classes of the population, where it brought consolation for all the wretchedness, and that virtue—charity, which Christ and St Paul had taught from the first. It condemned riches, which seemed to it 'a fruit of iniquity or an inheritance of injustice,' and it showed love to poverty and suffering, which it regarded as the means of redeeming terrestrial life. . . . How sweet to the disinherited must the gospel of equality before God have seemed, or the redemption of souls by the Eternal Son who had been insulted, scoffed at, scourged, and finally crucified like a slave. Christ's passion appeared to them merely a page out of their own history, and the Good Tidings seemed to have been directed more particularly at the small and the lowly."§

There are yet other passages in Duruy, which might be adduced as further supporting Nietzsche; but there is no room to quote all, and we shall be obliged to return to him, in regard to the relation of women to Christianity.

Dr Hertzberg, in his *History of the Roman Empire*,

* *Histoire des Romains*, Vol. V. p. 223.
† *Ibid.*, Vol. IV. p. 506. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 512.
§ *Ibid.*, Vol. V. pp. 778, 779.

speaks in very much the same terms as Schiller and Duruy,* while Lecky, Bury, Stewart Jones and Professor Lindsay, severally say interesting things in more or less perfect agreement with those already mentioned; but I shall only find occasion to quote them in the course of the discussion.

Most authors also seem to agree with regard to another question relative to the point at issue, and that is the attitude of women to the early Church. Indeed, from all accounts, women seem to have shown rather a weakness for Christianity, and the importance of this element cannot be overrated. As Mr Bury observes: " Christianity cherished the amiable affections, and was particularly suited to be understood and embraced by women and children, who, according to Aristotle, are creatures of passion, as opposed to men who are capable of living by reason."†

" Christianity," says Duruy, " has always been particularly tenderly disposed towards women. And this is only just, seeing that they are still its most powerful adherents. Their fertile imagination, their delicate nature, so virginal still in the spouse and the mother, were captivated by a Faith which commanded charity and love.... By virtue of their nervous constitutions, women are predisposed to exalted states of mind; many yielded thereto, and these had visions or prophetic lapses."‡

Hertzberg speaks in similar language, and Lecky

* *Geschichte des Römischen Kaiserreiches.* Erstes Buch., pp. 454, 455, 456.

† *History of the Later Roman Empire.* J.B. Bury, M.A., Vol. I. p. 18.

‡ *Histoire des Romains*, Vol. VI. p. 119.

says: "The Christian teacher was early noted for his unrivalled skill in playing on the chords of a woman's heart. The graphic title of 'Earpicker of Ladies,' which was given to a seductive pontiff of a somewhat later period, might have been applied to many in the days of the persecution."*

The social aspect of Christianity, in its influence upon women, must also not be overlooked. As Hertzberg says, it considerably elevated them socially, and therefore would very naturally meet with particular support from their sex.

In point of fact, though, a discussion upon this subject will be found to be very little to the purpose. What would it matter after all, even if overwhelming evidence could be brought from the other side, proving to the hilt, that aristocrats and men of culture constituted at least a reasonable proportion of the primitive church, let us say, in Rome?

We know the decadent philosophy, which, even before the republic fell, had been introduced into Italy by Carneades, and which prepared the transition that was very soon to take place, from the tempestuous liberty of that age, to the flat servitude of the empire.†

Scepticism and Epicureanism were gaining their converts long before the birth of the Man who was ultimately to draw the famous retort: "What is truth?" from Pontius Pilate, and in this retort itself, we are

* *History of European Morals*, Vol. I. p. 418.

† *See* Pressensé: *Histoire des trois premiers siecles de l'Eglise*, Vol. I. p. 228.

able to form some idea of the cynicism of the average cultivated Roman, at the time when Jesus of Nazareth was preaching His gospel.

Are we going to compare the Roman *élite* of the early empire, even with the illustrious patricians from which Cæsar sprang? Even admitting that aristocrats of the debased type described by Duruy and Milman, in their respective comments on the court of Constantine, were proselytes of the church, what, after all, does such a fact prove? Is it supposed, for a moment, that it elevates the status of the Christian values?

We know " the world had grown grey independently of Christianity, and if it had not grown grey, Christianity would hardly have been possible—would not have had much meaning; it met the need of the world at the time . . .";* we know that " it aspired to a type of character and [was] actuated by hopes and motives wholly inconsistent with that proud martial ardour by which the triumphs of Rome had been won, and by which alone, her impending ruin could be averted."†

" It exalted the feminine un-Roman side of man's nature, the side that naturally loves pleasure and shrinks from pain, and [above all] feels quick sympathy; —in fact, the Epicurean side."‡

Putting it briefly, we know it was decadent (in the accepted sense of that word) and appealed to a decad-

* *History of the Later Roman Empire*, Vol. I. p. 4.
† *History of European Morals*, Vol. I. p. 413.
‡ *History of the Later Roman Empire*, Vol. I. p. 8.

ent people. Almost all historians are unanimous in attributing the dissolution of the Roman world, partly to its influence; and we know, or we have understood from what has gone before, in this paper, that Nietzsche makes no distinction between the slave and the decadent type. It is therefore of very little moment what the early church consisted of, whether of slaves or of nobles; for, apart from the fact that, owing to the influx of provincials, the intermarriage of freedmen with their superiors, and the consequent mixing of the races, the nobles must have become exceedingly corrupt; we further know, that the ideals and hopes, even of the *haute volée* of Rome, were growing ever more and more degenerate during the second and third centuries of the Christian era.

In the heart of this decaying society, Christianity shot her firmest roots; the noble values succumbed, stifled by the overwhelming numbers of those who shared the other, the baser kind. It was the triumph of the poor in spirit. It was the Will to Power of the degenerate, the sick and the generally impossible.

If, however, this is all exaggeration, calumny, and overstatement, how can we account for the fact, that "one of the earliest results of Christianity in the [Roman] empire was the promulgation of laws ensuring the protection of the feeble and the helpless?"* How can we explain the circumstance that, "the condition of slaves was also greatly ameliorated by the new spirit

* Professor T. M. Lindsay in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Article, "Christianity" (Ninth Edition), p. 697.

of Christianity * which was then working in society ";† or that " the silent revolution which Christianity wrought in social morality is to be traced . . . above all, in the establishment of buildings for the reception of strangers, alms-houses for the poor, hospitals and orphan-houses for the sick and the forsaken? "‡

These people would have power, they would propagate their species and survive as well as the high, the healthy and the happy; how could they do so? How could they get the powerful, the believers in healthy and well-constituted life, to allow them to do so?

Everything was against them. Even the law of Nature seemed to be that they should perish. What did they do? Danger lends cunning. We have seen what they did. They made the astutest attempt that was ever made to turn all things topsy-turvy. Theirs was the first Transvaluation of all Values. If with Professor Saintsbury, we are going to speak of topsyturvification: *theirs* was the first topsyturvification. But we prefer Herbert Spencer's expression: " Inversion of thought and sentiment."

Indeed it would even be unwise to ignore the passage in his works in which he finds cause to make use of this expression so reminiscent of Nietzsche's own phrase: " the world upside-down." It throws light upon our subject, and it shows, moreover, how near even Spencer himself was, to the discovery of two moralities,—of a slave- and a master-morality, although at the time

*Pressensé: *Histoire des trois premiers siecles*, Vol. II. pp. 274-277.

† Prof. Lindsay, *Encyclopædia Britannica*. ‡ *Ibid.*

when he comes nearest to it, he is only speaking of the Restraints on Free Competition.

In the second volume of his Ethics, he says: "Among those who compete with one another in the same occupation, there must in all cases be some who are the more capable and a larger number who are the less capable. In strict equity, the more capable are justified in taking full advantage of their greater capabilities, and where beyond their own sustentation, they have to provide for the sustentation of their families, and the meeting of further claims, the sanction of strict equity suffices them. Usually, society immediately benefits by the putting-out of their highest powers, and it also receives a future benefit by the efficient fostering of its best members and their offspring.

"In such cases then—and they are the cases which the mass of society, constituted chiefly of manual workers, presents us with—justice needs to be but little qualified by beneficence. This proposition is indeed denied, and the opposite proposition affirmed, by hosts of workers in our own day. Among the trades-unionists and among leading socialists, as also among those of the rank and file, there is now the conviction, expressed in a way implying indignant repudiation of any other conviction, that the individual has no right to inconvenience his brother worker by subjecting him to any stress of competition. A man who undertakes to do work by the piece at lower rates than would else be paid, and is enabled by diligence long-continued to earn a sum nearly double that which he would have

received as wages, is condemned as 'unprincipled'! It is actually held that he has no right thus to take advantage of his superior powers and his greater energy; even though he is prompted to do this by the responsibilities a large family entails, and by a desire to bring up his children well; so completely have the 'advanced' among us inverted the old ideas of duty and merit."

Here, as Spencer might have seen, we have an example of the Will to Power of the less capable, becoming victorious over the more capable, through a valuation. And what is this valuation? Why, that to the less capable, all that is more capable is "evil"; therefore they call the more capable man unprincipled! If he accepts this valuation, as he very often must, owing to being outnumbered, his greater capabilities are vanquished, and are cancelled from among the factors that may lead mankind a step farther forward. "Inversion of thought and sentiment"; that is what inferior- or slave-morality must accomplish before it can be victorious: that is the expedient of the incapable, the impotent and the poor in spirit, when they wish to make their kind paramount.

Every means, every artifice, every strategy, that presented itself to their imagination, they used to further their subterranean purpose. Not only must the strong, healthy and powerful, blush with shame for being what they are; but the happy among them must be taught, that happiness is almost a sin. They must be taught that "wretchedness is a selection and distinction from God, that the dogs which are liked most are

whipped, that the misery of the weak, the oppressed and the diseased, may perhaps also be a preparation, a trial, a schooling, perhaps even more—something which at some time to come, will be requited and paid back with immense interest in gold, no!—in happiness. This they call blessedness." *

"For whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth," says the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten," is a sentiment to be found in Revelations.

Thus they deck out and adorn the inevitable wretchedness of their condition, and wish to wield power with this decoration. These listless ones suffering from life as from a crushing burden; what do they do? They posit a beyond, where their species alone will attain to honour, happiness and the like; where the lowly will become mighty, where the poor will be lying in the lap of comfort and smug ease, while their enemies, the rich, will be writhing in eternal agony. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." This is one of their household sentiments. "These people who invented hell, that they might have a heaven upon earth,"† who invented the concept "beautiful soul," that they might at least possess something beautiful "here below"‡ and with a thirst for power which their impotence only aggravated, stopped at nothing, no, not even at the attempt to

* G.M., p 48. † Z., "The Convalescent One."
‡ *See* G.M., p. 166.

monopolise virtue upon earth,* in order to gain their ends.

" God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.

" And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea* and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

To those who can boast of the smallest " tincture of psychology," is it not clear, now, in what kind of mind these thoughts originated, or for what kind of minds they were expressed? Is it necessary to press the point?

" We must not embellish or deck out Christianity, it has waged a deadly war against the higher type of man, it has put in ban all fundamental instincts of this type, it has distilled evil, the evil one, out of these instincts: —strong man as the typical reprobate, as 'out-cast man.' Christianity has taken the part of the weak, the low, the ill-constituted, it has made an ideal out of the antagonism to the preservative instincts of strong life; it has ruined the reason of the intellectually strongest natures, in that it taught men to regard the highest values of intellectuality as sinful, as misleading, as temptations."†

We now clearly see, that it is not the hopes or the little comforts or the legends of Christianity, that Nietzsche wishes to combat. The nature of Professor Huxley's attack upon Christianity seemed futile to him; as

* G.M., p. 165. † C.W., p. 244.

he somewhere declares: "all its legends and metaphysical beliefs might be a thousand times more incredible than they are, and I would have nought to say. But it is the morality,—the moralic acid—underlying it all, which I regard as the great danger—Christian ideals."

Christian values being of that type which he distinguishes as slave-morality, they represent the descending line of life, and with them, Nietzsche declares, man must perforce degenerate. Nietzsche regards these values as the means of handicapping the desirable type of man, in the race of life; they equalise the chances of the desirable and undesirable in this world, and, when Nietzsche points out that this is wrong, he does no more than Herbert Spencer did, when he said: "a society which takes for its maxim—'It shall be as well for you to be inferior as to be superior,' will inevitably degenerate and die away in long-drawn miseries."* The only point which is here at issue between Nietzsche and Spencer, lies in the meanings given to the terms "superior" and "inferior."

And it is precisely Christian morality and Christian ideals which we have not succeeded in ridding ourselves of. Although we may repudiate all religious views, it is the religion of pity and patient toleration which still reigns in our heart of hearts.

We have but to look around, in order to convince ourselves as to how many-too-many we are allowing to survive like parasites in our midst; how many-too-

* *Principles of Ethics*, Vol. II. p. 281; *see* also *Principles of Biology*, Vol. II. pp. 532, 533.

many we are allowing to propagate, who have no right to do so, how many-too-many we are cruelly keeping alive as monuments of misery, serving but to depress and embitter the rising generation. " Both sexes ought to refrain from marriage if they are in any marked degree inferior in body or mind," said Darwin; " but," he added, desperately, " such hopes are Utopian."*

" The sickly are the great danger of man: not the evil, not the ' beasts of prey.' They who are ill-shaped, prostrated and wrecked from birth, they, the *weakest*, are those who most undermine life among men: who most dangerously poison and question our confidence in life, in man, in ourselves."†

And these, with our Christian morality, we maintain, and succour, to the detriment of all that is successful, well-constituted and promising; to the detriment of all that can stand as a pledge for the future of our race. It is a war between the sick and the sound. The sick elevated pity to the highest place among the virtues, and the sound allowed themselves to be duped, because virtue is tempting and is attended with great rewards hereafter.

And who, among you, to-day, who is clear-sighted enough, can doubt which class, the sick or the sound, is obtaining the victory? Nietzsche asks you, is it your taste that this state of things should be allowed to continue? Are you going to be instrumental in effecting the conquest of the sick over the sound? Does the type

* *Descent of Man*, 2nd Edit., Vol. II. p. 483.
† G.M., p. 164.

of man, who is tending to survive with Christian values, answer to your ideal of man, to your taste in manhood?

The problem of the value of pity and morality of pity is the serious problem Nietzsche set himself to solve. Are we to cling to this morality, which has been imposed upon us with such skill, such insidious subtlety and so much ostentation of all that it has appropriated as its own in virtue, value and highest hopes, and which under examination proves to have an origin so undeniably base?

Do we not see in this morality of the present day, precisely the hindrance of power, the cultivation of an evil odour about all that is mighty, healthy and happy? and therefore the multiplication of that kind of people who possess the other, the opposite qualities; dependence, lowliness, impotence, sickness and humility. The results of these principles are already showing themselves, wherever we choose to look, not in thousands, but in millions of cases.

" Man is the sick animal " *par excellence*, and he will continue getting ever more sick, in the forcing house of superterrestrial virtues and ideals which modern Europe has become.

" The more normal the sickliness is in man—and we cannot deny this normality,—the more highly those rare cases of spiritual and bodily capability, the lucky cases of man, should be honoured; and the more rigorously the well-constituted should be guarded against that worst air, sick-room air. Is that done? . . . All in all it is not the diminution of the fear of man which is de-

sirable. For this fear compels the strong to be strong, nay, as the case may be, even terrible. Fear preserves the well-constituted type of man. That which really is to be feared, that which proves fatal beyond fatalities —is not the great fear, but the great *surfeit* of man. . . . He who smells, not only with his nose, but with his eyes and ears as well, will, almost wherever he steps to-day, experience a sensation as of mad and sick-house air."*

The noble, healthy and master values in morality have been stifled and well-nigh forgotten. The happy and healthy have actually been taught to say: " It is a disgrace to be happy! There is too much misery! "†

Nietzsche protests against this ridiculous surrender on the part of those, only, who have a right to universalise their kind, and the multiplication of whose type would be a blessing to mankind. . . . " There could be no greater, no more fatal misunderstanding," he says, " than if thus the happy, the well-constituted, the mighty in body and soul were to begin to doubt their own right to happiness. Away with this world turned upside down! " he cries. " Away with this shameful effeminacy of sentiment! That the sick may not make the sound sick—and this would be the meaning of such an effeminacy—surely this should be the first point of view on earth."‡

Nietzsche will not have the higher made a tool of what is lower; the idea is repugnant to him; it is not his

* G.M., pp. 163, 164. Nietzsche here adds in parenthesis: "(I am, as is but fair, speaking here of the realm of human civilisation,—every kind of Europe existing nowadays on earth)."

† G.M., p. 167. ‡ *Ibid.*

taste. He regards the right of the happy and well-constituted to exist, to be here on earth, as a thousand times greater than that of the wretched and the sick. For on the happy alone devolves the task of propagating worthy and promising men: they alone are under the obligation for the to-morrow and the day-after-morrow of mankind. " What they are able to do, they shall do, that the sick could never and should never do! "*

This condemnation of Christian values, he would write on all walls. He says he has means wherewith he can make even the blind see.† From his standpoint Christianity is dwarfing, deforming and generally deteriorating man, mentally and physically. The type that is tending to survive by means of it, is contrary to his taste. He wishes this type, to be contrary to *our* taste. He says his warning comes only just in the nick of time; " the soil is still rich enough for that purpose. But one day that soil will be impoverished and tame, no high tree being any longer able to grow from it."‡

" There are days," says Nietzsche, " when I am visited by a feeling blacker than the blackest melancholy—contempt of man. And, that I have no doubt with regard to what I despise, whom I despise,—it is the man of to-day, the man with whom I am fatally contemporaneous. The man of to-day—I suffocate from his impure breath. With respect to what is past, I am like all who perceive of a great tolerance, *i.e.* a

* G.M., p. 168. † C.W., p. 354.
‡ Z., " Int. Speech," ¶ 5.

generous self-overcoming. With a gloomy circumspection I go through the mad-house world of entire millenniums (it may be called ' Christianity,' ' Christian Faith,' ' Christian Church ')—I take care not to make mankind accountable for its insanities. But my feeling changes suddenly, and breaks out as soon as I enter the modern period, our *period*. Our age knows. . . . What was formerly, merely morbid, now has become unseemly,—it is unseemly to be a Christian! "*

Unless we approach Nietzsche with prejudice, unless we read him superficially, and without keeping our eyes constantly upon his aim, we must realise that there is much more, under all this antagonism towards Christianity, than the mere bitterness of a factionary or the destructive lust of an iconoclast. Huxley attacked Christianity very thoroughly and not without some show of bitterness; but those among you who have read his *Science and Christian Tradition*, will remember not only that he claims to be aiming at the truth alone, but that his methods of attack is quite different from the one you have just heard.

Nietzsche saw grand and unexhausted possibilities in man, in man's past he thought he held the warrant for still expecting something great from man's future, and upon this warrant he built his hope of Superman. He attacks Christian values, because he holds them to be inimical to a higher development of man: there is no question with him of a petty dispute with the Church concerning the probability of the " Gadarene-Swine "

* C.W., p. 295.

story. His attack upon Christian values, as we know, has a loftier and more practical aim. He would see man have an ideal on earth. He would draw men's eyes downwards and give man a practical hope and aim.

" Remain faithful unto earth, my brethren, with the power of your virtue! Let your giving love and your knowledge serve the significance of earth! Thus I beg and conjure you.

" Let it not fly away from what is earthly and beat against eternal walls with its wings! Alas! so much virtue hath ever gone astray in flying!

" Like me lead back unto earth the virtue which has gone astray—yea; back unto body and life: that it may give its significance unto earth, a human significance! "*

" Many sick folk were always among the makers of poetry and the god-maniacs; furiously they hate him who prosecuteth research and the youngest of virtues that is called honesty.

" Backward they ever gaze into the dark times: then, of course, illusion and belief were something else. Intoxication of reason was likeness unto God, and doubt was sin.

" Only too well I know these god-like ones; they wish to be believed in and that doubt should be sin."†

As I told you in my last lecture, Nietzsche was not an iconoclast, from predilection. No bitterness or empty hate dictated his vituperations against the Church of his parents and forefathers. He knew too well what

* Z., " Of the Giving Virtue," ¶ 2. † Z., " Of Back-World Men."

Christianity meant to the millions who profess it, to approach the task of uprooting it, with levity or even with haste. He broke the idols of his ancestors and contemporaries, because he wished to present the latter with an ideal more worthy of their inheritance, more compatible with their unexhausted powers, and, above all, more earthly and more practicable.

"He who must be a creator in good and evil," he says, "verily, he must first be a destroyer, and break values into pieces."*

In my last lecture you were given a description of the ideal Nietzsche had. The object of this lecture was to show you how he attempted to clear the ground for it. And it will be the business of the next paper to consider *how* he intends rearing his ideal on the land he has devastated.

Like a prophet, he stands at Man's cross-roads, the time he says is Man's great Mid-day.

"The present and past on earth—alas! my friends, —these are what I find most intolerable. And I should not know how to live, if I were not a prophet of what must come.

"A prophet, a willing one, a creator, a veritable future, and a bridge unto the future—and alas! besides, as it were a cripple at that bridge. All these things is Zarathustra."†

I cannot remind you too often, that he calls himself only "a prelude to better players," that he tells us emphatically that there are other ways than his, and

* Z., "Of Self-overcoming." † Z., "Of Salvation."

that he would prefer us to find one of our own which is not his, than that we should have none at all, than that we should remain indifferent, or decadent, or Christians.

"Eagerly and with much crying, they drove their flocks over the wooden bridges, as if there were only a single bridge into the future! Verily, those herdsmen also were sheep!

"Petty intellects and comprehensive souls these herdsmen had: but, my brethren, what small territories hitherto have been even the most comprehensive souls!"*

With this I am at the conclusion of Nietzsche's condemnation of Christianity. It is always an unpleasant task to destroy—even to announce the destroyer. A more pleasant task awaits me; that of communicating the constructive side of his moral philosophy to you.

At the noon of Life, he said he came; during the forenoon we had been irresponsible, he says he regards our past with toleration. But, now, *we Know*. It is unseemly, now, to blind ourselves to what lies before us. We are at the fateful crossways. Is this poet-philosopher estimating us too highly perhaps in supposing that the ideal he gives us, is really compatible with our strength, with our unexhausted powers? Is our answer to him, going to be, that we do not feel able to follow his lead?

"Oh, sky above me!" he sings. "Thou pure, thou high! Therein consisteth thy purity for me, that there are no eternal spiders of reason and spiders' webs of reason—

* Z., "Of Priests."

" That for me thou art a dancing ground for god-like chances, that for me thou art a god-like table for god-like dice and dice-players!

" But thou blushest? Spake I things unutterable? did I revile whilst intending to bless thee?

" Oh, sky above me. Thou bashful! Thou glowing! Oh, thou my happiness before sunrise! The day cometh! now therefore let us part! "*

* Z., " Before sunrise."

END OF LECTURE III.

IV

Nietzsche: The Moralist *

In this last paper, I shall attempt to gather up all the threads of Nietzsche's teaching, and seek that point towards which all his many hints, all his innumerable and apparently unconnected paradoxes, and all his thousand and one pregnant innuendoes, seem inevitably to direct us; and it is my hope that I may succeed in proving precisely the reverse of what has so often been contended in regard to his work. It is my hope to be able to show you that his philosophy is, after all, a systematic whole, that whatever the votaries of tabulated formulæ and mathematically regulated thought may say to the contrary, we have in his teaching, a thing which is of one piece, a well-defined and unmistakable figure, hewn from one integral block, whose silhouette, however, is so subtly delineated and so artfully contrived, that, like Rodin's superb Balzac, it may evade our mental grasp, it may seem to us, at first, to be a thing without real form, without careful definition and, perhaps, without substance.

Having grown used to getting much of our mental work done for us; living at a time when even thinking

* Delivered at the University of London, December 9th, 1908.

is rapidly becoming a speciality, and being accustomed to begin a philosopher at his First Principles, and to read straight on through his more or less easy gradations, until we arrive at what he is pleased to term his 20th or his 100th or his Last Principles; it is readily admitted that we must be somewhat bewildered by a man who is quite capable of telling us his last thought first, and of then rolling us, headforemost, down hill, over his experiences, so that we reach the bottom of his depths, giddy, tired, and often bruised. But who, after all, is to dictate what the method shall be? Are we as a rule directed by the recipients of our gifts, as to how and what we should buy, and how and when we should bestow our purchases? Do we feel it incumbent upon us to make our form, unquestionably *their form?* And when we face Nietzsche, we must remember that we are in the presence of a prodigal giver.

Because we often fail to follow his line of thought, are we to deny that he is thinking in a straight line? And may we not, by so doing, make him responsible for a fault which he most probably is quite innocent of? These seem to me questions which might well be put, before we hastily proclaim our author's philosophy as unsystematic.

We are spoilt children, in this sense, but spoilt children are generally so, in both acceptations of the word; and there is no doubt that the reception which Nietzsche's philosophy has met with, shows very pointedly how completely former philosophers have spoilt us.

Because Nietzsche refused to regard us as children at all; because he spoke to us, as one speaks to intelligent friends and equals, and not as one addresses a class-room of small boys, we say he brings us no system; we may even say with Professor Saintsbury, that after writing his third or fourth book, he could not have been quite *compos mentis*; let us, however, hesitate before we underscore these opinions too confidently. Such verdicts have been given before in regard to great thinkers. Do we all know that when Rodin's Balzac was first exhibited at the Salon des Beaux Arts, it had to be protected from a jeering and guffawing mob, whereas, now, it is acknowledged to be one of his sublimest creations by those who are best able to form any judgment in the matter? If we did not know this, we certainly know how many more cases of the kind it would be possible to quote.

Nietzsche said to his disciples:—

"Ye say ye believe in Zarathustra? But what is Zarathustra worth? Ye are my faithful ones: but what are all faithful ones worth?

"When ye had not yet sought yourselves, ye found me. Thus do all faithful ones; hence all belief is worth so little.

"Now I ask you to lose me and find yourselves, not until all of you have disowned me, shall I return unto you."*

This is an exhortation in favour of independent mental exercise. No teacher who valued his teaching

* Z., "Of the Giving Virtue," ¶ 3.

higher than his pupils' intellects could talk in this way. And are we to suppose, therefore, that in addressing those whom he held to be his equals, this same teacher was going to offer them the insult of making things easy for them?

When we approach Nietzsche's philosophy, we must be prepared to be independent thinkers; in fact, the greatest virtue of his philosophy is perhaps the subtlety with which it imposes the obligation upon one, of thinking alone, of scoring off one's own bat, and of shifting intellectually for one's self.

"I am a railing alongside the stream; whoever is able to seize me, may seize me, your crutch, however, I am not."*

The average philosopher makes disciples and enslaves them. Who has not been, for a time, the slave of Kant's *Categorical Imperative*, of Mills' *Utilitarianism*, of Spencer's *Administrative Nihilism*, of Darwin's *Struggle for Existence*? Nietzsche is prouder when he lends a man the courage to think honestly and courageously for himself, than when he makes him his proselyte.

"Have ye courage, O my brethren? Are ye stout-hearted? I do *not* mean courage in the presence of witnesses, but the courage of hermits and eagles on which not even a God looketh any more.

"Cold souls, mules, blind folk, drunken folk I do not call stout-hearted. Courage hath he who knoweth fear but *subdueth* fear; he who seeth the abyss, but with pride. He who seeth the abyss, but with the eagle's

* Z., "Of the Pale Criminal."

eyes; he who *graspeth* the abyss with an eagle's claws; he hath courage."*

" If ye want to rise high, use your own legs! Do not let yourselves be *carried* upwards, sit not down on strange backs and heads! "†

The nearer we get to the heart of Nietzsche's teaching, the more honestly convinced we become, that he is rather a friend walking at our elbow, in the open, suggesting, insinuating, exhorting and chaffing, than a herdsman looking for a herd which he may lead and squeeze into a pen.

This, in fact, is the test underlying Nietzscheism. If we are of the herd, we naturally sniff around for our fold, for our rules, and formulæ, for our restrictions and our constraints; we have learned to love these things, and we cry aloud, when they are not to be found: " behold our leader has no system! He is but a bungler who has no business with herds! "—no, indeed, Nietzsche had no business with herds; this is true. In respect of the herd, he was certainly not *compos mentis ;* but then, to do him justice, he never claimed to be.

. . . . . .

However incredible the statement may sound, it is nevertheless true, that Nietzsche's philosophy actually constitutes one regularly organised whole. Even the course I was compelled to adopt in these lectures, is evidence enough of this; for, after giving you his analysis of modern morality, I was driven to describe his ideal Man, that you might have immediate justifica-

* Z., "Of Higher Man," ¶ 4. † *Ibid.*, ¶ 10.

tion for his drastic criticism; while in the third lecture, his condemnation of Christian values came but as a necessary preface to this lecture, in which I wish to treat exclusively of *his* values. The surprise of those who accuse him of want of system, however, will probably increase considerably, when they hear that even his moral values cannot be isolated and studied apart, that they must be understood through his Sociology and in the light of his ideal man. This statement, I know, has been contradicted again and again, not only in words, but in actions; for we have only to think of Mr George Bernard Shaw in order to have an instance, at once, of a distinguished thinker, who believes he can divide Nietzsche up into portions, and take only that portion of him that happens to show most affinity to the Shavian constitution, and leave the rest. Everyone knows that Mr Shaw is a socialist, despite the fact that he claims to be in agreement with Nietzsche's attitude towards morality.*

Be this as it may, Nietzsche's Sociology, his ideal Man and his morality are all one, and to separate them would be as foolish and as unwarrantable as to separate pity or charity from Christianity.

" There are some that preach my doctrine of life," he says of the Bernard Shaws of the world, " but at the same time are preachers of equality and tarantulæ."†

Now at the root of all sociologies lies the notion of what life means to the Sociologist. The Hedonists and

* *See* Bernard Shaw in *The Saturday Review.*
† Z., "Of Tarantulæ."

the Utilitarians practically agree in solving the problem of life, by making its end the greatest happiness, or the greatest smugness, of the greatest number. Nietzsche solves the problem of existence by declaring life to be Will to Power.

What do such cross-purposes mean? The layman who thinks an instant upon these questions, becomes desperate. He refuses even to believe that the philosophers, themselves, know what they are talking about. After arriving at a general concept of what social life is, I think we shall be nearer to a clear grasp of the question we have to solve.

The whole matter seems to revolve around the point discussed in the second paper, where I was considering Nietzsche's attitude towards pain. There can be no doubt, I suppose, that happiness constitutes the performance of those actions which we are most gifted to perform. Spencer says somewhere that the reason why a rhinoceros ploughs up the ground with his horn, in confinement, is, that having no enemy to fight, he must seek the pleasure of using the weapon of attack and defence, with which he is gifted, in some other way. He is an adept in the violent use of his natural weapon, it consequently gives him pleasure to use it.

Now, presumably, this view holds good with us. We find most pleasure in performing those actions for which we are most thoroughly gifted, or, as the biologists say, " to which we are best adapted."

Laotze, writing in China, about six centuries before Christ, said: " Whosoever knoweth how to give

in and to forget himself [in fact, to accommodate himself] will remain whole."* It is evident, therefore, that we are not concerned here with a new doctrine. It seems to be a very old one, and one that is very generally accepted. The only difficulty about it, is its application.

It seems clear that, since we are rational beings with certain inventive powers, we can exercise some choice as to what actions and what manner of life we shall become adapted to. If it really be a fact, that we, as human beings, are still unadapted, and that a large number of the social actions we perform are still unpleasant to us; it must be pretty evident that no definite mode of life has as yet been fixed upon by our innermost nature,—and, speaking without exaggeration, how could we possibly expect the case to be otherwise; seeing that, with us Europeans, at least, every century turns its predecessor practically upside down?

But it *is* possible, as we shall see, to become adapted, to any conditions, and therefore to grow happy in any conditions, provided of course we survive the process of adaptation. That famous Chinaman, Laotze, did not know, perhaps, that it would be precisely the practical acceptation of his doctrine of adaptation which would help to stamp the character of his nation for over two thousand years.

The preachers of Hedonism, therefore, and the Utilitarians, unlike Nietzsche and unlike the Puritans, who, as we shall see, are also anti-adaptationalists,

* C. De Harlez, "Textes Tâoïstes," p. 42, chap. xxii.

point peremptorily to happiness, that is to say to complete adaptation, as the important aim of all, and give no thought to the desirability or the advisability of the thing, if it really were achieved.

All our hasty Parliamentary bills, all our little devices for alleviating suffering, almost all our philosophies—except Nietzsche's, are merely little essays, little groping attempts on our part, to become adapted to our conditions; that is to say, to become Gifted for the actions we have to perform in our conditions. The growth in London, alone, of the Music-Hall and Theatre business, is a sign of the times. The arduousness of town-life must be forgotten; the unpleasantness of actions, which we are not adapted to, must be mitigated,—how do we try to adapt ourselves to them? This point is important. We try to adapt ourselves to them by making them merely a part of a whole, which we call *town-life*, and in which we introduce a compensating factor consisting of Theatres, Music-Halls and Exhibitions. The so-called "advanced" and "smart" set who jeer at the Puritan when he inveighs against Music-Halls and Theatres, forget that of the two movements (theirs and his) *his* is the more advanced, the more pregnant with promises for the future. I do not suppose now, and I never have supposed that the Puritan rails against Music-Halls and Theatres from any deep philosophical motive; but the fact remains, that in doing so, he is more conducive to reform, movement, and instability than those he rails against, because he is preaching against those very measures

which threaten to adapt us sooner or later to the performance of actions which are now, at least, totally opposed to our tastes and inmost desires.

We are trying hard, nowadays, to become adapted. Socialists think they have found the road thereto. But, is it clearly understood that any method of life, however base, however ignominious, might ultimately mean happiness to us, provided we grew adapted to it?

This is precisely the great danger,—the great cloud lowering over mankind. This is the danger Nietzsche came to warn us about. Even in Socialism, happiness may be found, provided we become adapted to it. The question is not, whether Socialism is possible, it is rather: whether it is worthy of us; whether it is dignified for us, in view of our unexhausted powers, to adapt ourselves to it?

"This universal *degeneracy* of *mankind* to the level of the man of the future," says Nietzsche, "as idealised by the socialistic fools and shallow-pates—this degeneracy and dwarfing of man to an absolutely gregarious animal (or as they call it, to a man of 'free society'), this brutalising of men into pygmies with equal rights and claims, is undoubtedly possible! He who has thought out this possibility to its ultimate conclusion, knows *another* loathing unknown to the rest of mankind—and perhaps also a new mission!"

But let us hear what an avowed Utilitarian and advocate of Liberty for all, John Stuart Mill, had to say on the subject of this maniacal scurry to become adapted, by all means, by all subterfuges, by all prevarications:—

" We have a warning example in China—a nation of much talent, and, in some respects, even wisdom, owing to the rare good fortune " [you notice he cannot even help calling it " rare good fortune " in spite of what is going to follow], " owing to the rare good fortune of having been provided at an early period with a particularly good set of customs, the work, in some measure, of men to whom even the most enlightened European must accord, under certain limitations, the title of sages and philosophers. They are remarkable, too, in the excellence of the apparatus, for impressing, as far as possible, the best wisdom they possess upon every mind in the community, and securing that those who have appropriated most of it shall occupy posts of honour and power. Surely the people who did this have discovered the secret of human progressiveness, and must have kept themselves steadily at the head of the movement of the world.*

" On the contrary, they have become stationary—have remained so for thousands of years; and if they are ever to be further improved, it must be by foreigners. They have succeeded beyond all hope in what English philanthropists are so industriously working at

* Why Mill says "Surely" here, it is impossible to say. If he had said: "surely the people who did this have discovered the secret of human stultification," we should have understood. The word "surely" in this sentence betrays the whole attitude of muddle-headedness, which he maintained to the fundamental law of the question he was discussing. It will be retorted that "surely" here is ironical. My reply is that "surely" stands for "one would think," and that it therefore implies that what follows is a probable conclusion which might, at a pinch, be drawn from the premises; whereas neither the reader nor the philosopher has any business to regard the conclusion as *possible*—much less as probable.

—in making a people alike, all governing their thoughts and conduct by the same maxims and rules; and these are the fruits. The modern *régime* of public opinion is, in an unorganised form, what the Chinese educational and political systems are in an organised, and unless individuality shall be able successfully to assert itself against this yoke, Europe, notwithstanding its noble antecedents . . . will tend to become another China!"*

This is John Stuart Mill's own expression of astonishment that the state of affairs which Laotze's doctrine of adaptation undoubtedly helped to bring about, was not a progressive, a mercurial one!

But it must not be thought that Nietzsche cries out against Socialism alone. It would seem just as great a calamity to him if we became adapted to the conditions existing in Europe at the present day. This hurry and anxiety to achieve complete adaptation at all is what he objects to. He has higher aims for humanity; —aims more compatible with humanity's antecedents and more worthy of its latent possibilities. Hence his bitterness towards the Hedonists and the Utilitarians, hence, too, as we have seen, his exhortation to us, to be less fearful of pain.

Honest and truthful in intellectual matters, he could not even think that men are equal. Those to whom this thought gives pleasure, he conjures not to confound pleasure with truth; and, like Professor Huxley, he finds himself compelled to recognise " The Natural Inequality of Men."

* *On Liberty*, Chapter, " The Elements of Well-Being."

" I do not wish to be confounded with, and mistaken for, those preachers of equality. For, within *me*, justice saith: ' Men are not equal! '

" Neither shall they become so! For what would be my love for Superman if I spake otherwise?

" On a thousand bridges and gangways, they shall throng towards the future, and ever more and more war and inequality shall be set up amongst them. Thus my great love maketh me speak! "*

It is the reverse of adaptation that Nietzsche recommends; for only those who regard our present conditions as the best possible, can dare to preach adaptation, as a gospel, to-day. He says rather:—

" Good and evil, rich and poor, high and low, and all the names of values: they shall be weapons and clashing signs that life always hath to surpass itself again!

" Upwards it striveth to build itself with pillars and stairs, life itself: into far distances it longeth to gaze and outwards after blessed beauties—therefore it needeth height.

" And because it needeth height it needeth stairs and contradiction between stairs and those rising beyond them! To rise, striveth life, and to surpass itself in rising."†

Nietzsche recognises the natural Inequality of Men; all systems of Sociology who refuse to recognise, or who try to compromise concerning, it, he condemns; and, in his Sociology, he makes provision for it. Those which do not make provision for it do violence unto mankind, they

* Z., " Of Tarantulæ." † *Ibid.*

are a sort of Procrustean outrage on Nature, an attack upon her most fundamental and most decent principles.

He goes further, however, than the average believer in the Inequality of men usually goes. He sees precisely in this inequality a purpose to be served, a condition to be exploited. Every reader of his philosophy is familiar with his doctrine of chance,—his recommendation to all, to exploit chance and not to avoid it or let it exploit them.

Well, precisely in this chance distinction of classes among men, he sees a condition to be exploited and turned to advantage. He says:—

"Every elevation of the type 'man' has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society—and so will it always be—a society believing in a long scale of gradation of rank and differences of worth among human beings."*

The higher men of a society, where gradations of rank are recognised as a necessary and indispensable condition, constitute the class, in which the hopes of a real elevation of humanity may be placed. In such a society, no very perfect adaptation is possible. The border-line between each caste, becomes a territory where the contiguous classes act and react upon one another, where different influences produce new forms, and where the danger of stability is successfully and repeatedly resisted and overcome. It is an organism containing in its constitution the guarantee, almost, of heterogeneity. Like warmed water, it has strata, and currents continually running through those strata.

* G.E., p. 223.

Here, then, is the kind of society in which the moralist, with a very fixed idea as to "who is to be master of the world," may find the requisite scope for the display and the application of his talents. Here he may try to realise his ideal by directing precisely those currents we speak of into the direction which will lead to an elevation of the type "man."

In such a society, the very condition of unstable equilibrium, of ill-adaptedness, gives rise to a striving spirit which might be exploited and guided by the legislator to the benefit of the ideal race. In such a society, complete adaptation would have to be regarded as the devil himself, since it would be the arch-enemy of the spirit of ascent actuating the conduct of its greatest heroes. In such a society, Nietzsche says, the higher men might beget Superman, and it is for this society that he would legislate. Hear his exhortation unto Higher Men:—

"O my brethren, I consecrate you to be, and show unto you the way unto, a new nobility. Ye shall become procreators and breeders and sowers of the future.

"Verily, ye shall not become a nobility one might buy like shop-keepers, with shop-keepers' gold. For all that hath its fixed price is of little value.

"Not whence ye come be your honour in future, but whither ye go! Your will, and your foot that longeth to get beyond yourselves,—be that your new honour!

"O my brethren, not backward, shall your nobility gaze, but *forward!* Expelled ye shall be from all fathers' and forefathers' lands!

" Your children's land ye shall love (be this your new nobility), the land undiscovered in the remotest sea! For it I bid your sails seek and seek! "*

This is Nietzsche's taste in Sociology. There are other tastes, all equally possible. There's the taste for the herd—the socialistic taste; there's the taste for a Man-God—absolute monarchy; there's the taste, too, for Anarchy. To define Nietzsche's system of Sociology in a sentence, would be to call it an oligarchy, led onward by an ideal type of man, which the higher caste is ever trying to realise and surpass.

The aristocracy, in this society, must not be the pusillanimous mob that bowed and kowtowed to Louis the Fourteenth of France, or, to go further back, to many of the Roman Despots. " The essential thing, . . . in a good and healthy aristocracy," says Nietzsche, " is that it should *not* regard itself as a function, either of the kingship or of the commonwealth, but as the *significance* and the highest justification thereof—that it should therefore accept with a good conscience the sacrifice of a legion of individuals, who, *for its sake*, must be suppressed and reduced to imperfect men, to slaves and instruments. Its fundamental belief must be precisely, that society is *not* allowed to exist for its own sake, but only as a foundation and scaffolding, by means of which a select class of beings may be able to elevate themselves to their higher duties, and in general, to a higher existence. . . ."†

And Nietzsche does not despair, even of the shallow-

* Z., " Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 12. † G.E., p. 225.

pated socialists helping him. Indeed, he thinks it perfectly possible, if not probable, that they may; for, after all, what is it they most earnestly strive after? Is it not the levelling of the whole of society to the rank of that pusillanimous herd which may ultimately be regarded as the necessary groundwork of an oligarchy—the sort of muscular cells which, in our body, are subservient to the superior nervous cells, and thus constitute the ruled caste of a true oligarchy? Supposing the birth of a higher man to be still possible in the Ghettoes of this future socialistic society, is it not clear that he will find everything ready for him, everything smoothed and flattened preparatory to the assertion of his authority and superiority? Admitting slavery, in some form or other, to be a necessary "condition of every higher culture,"* is it not clear, that the mob created by the socialists will be just the ready instrument which the possible higher man will avail himself of? And has not the same sort of thing happened again and again, in the past? Although, if he be an adherent of Nietzsche's, this higher individual is to be no tyrant in the bad sense, can we doubt that, everywhere on earth, where tyrants have succeeded in establishing their rule, the ground has not always been already prepared for them, either by a faint-hearted religious creed, by a degenerate philosophy, or by a corrupt way of living? Socialism, in this way, may be a necessary step towards Nietzsche's ideal; but it is a dangerous circuit nevertheless; for there is just the remote chance that

* G.E., p. 225.

mankind might stop half way, become completely adapted to it, and then no higher man might be possible and an end would come to manly hopes and ideals.

Mr Chesterton says somewhere, I believe it is in a review of Dr Oscar Levy's book, *The Revival of Aristocracy*, that the oligarchic does not need the same manly hardness as the democratic state, and I believe he gives as his reason, that democracy presupposes the " desire to be master " in each individual, whereas oligarchy grants this master's spirit only to the few and the select.

It seems never to have occurred to Mr Chesterton, that in Democracy no real struggle for mastership ever takes place at all, that, under it, there is much less of a desire to rule, than a desire to further his own pretty personal interests, in the individual. Once these have been reasonably furthered, what is the experience of most legislators?—the interest of the private individual in legislation suddenly wanes and, very quickly, vanishes completely away. Spencer in his *Reflections* at the end of his Autobiography confesses that he must, however reluctantly, admit this to be so,* and his refusal to sit for Parliament was based to a large extent on considerations of this nature.

No, what the units of a herd most earnestly seek and find, is smug ease, not necessarily mastership. For mastership entails responsibility, insight, nerve, courage and hardness towards one's self, that control of one's self which all good commanders must have,

* *Autobiography*, Vol. II. p. 468. Also *see* pp. 202 and 466.

and which is the very antithesis of the gregarious man's attitude of comparative indulgence towards himself.

Now, responsibility, insight, nerve, courage, hardness, are disturbing, they are moreover not necessarily bound up with the individual gregarian's private interests, therefore they are not coveted by him. What he covets is smug ease—and every time some influence threatens to thwart this wretched complacency, he suddenly develops an interest for legislation; then, indeed, for a space, he will wish to be master.

Hardness?—He knows nothing of the hardness that can command his heart, his mouth and his hand, before it attends to the command of others; he knows nothing of the hardness that can dispel the doubts of a whole continent, that can lead the rabble and the ruck to deeds of anomalous nobility, or that can impose silence upon the overweening importunities of an assembled nation. He knows *this* hardness, that he could coldly watch the enemy of his private and insignificant little interests, burnt at the stake; he knows this hardness, that he would let a great national plan miscarry for the sake of a mess of pottage;—if this is the hardness Mr Chesterton refers to, then we are with him; the gregarious man and future socialist has this so-called hardness; but so have all those who burn with resentment,—so have all parasites and silent worm-gnawers at the frame-work of great architecture.

"In every healthy society, three types, mutually conditioning and differently gravitating, physiologically

separate themselves, each of which has its own hygiene, its own domain of labour, its own special sentiment of perfection, its own special mastership.

"Nature, *not* Manu, separates from one another the 1) mainly intellectual individuals, the individuals mainly 2) excelling in muscular strength and temperament, and 3) the third class neither distinguished in the one nor in the other, the mediocre individuals,—the latter as the great number; the former as the select individuals.

"The highest caste—I call them the *fewest*—has, as the perfect caste, the privileges of the fewest: it belongs thereto to represent happiness, beauty, goodness on earth. Only the most intellectual men have the permission to beauty, to the beautiful; it is only with them that goodness is not weakness . . . the good is a privilege. On the other hand, nothing can be less permissible to them than unpleasant manners, or a pessimistic look, an eye that *makes deformed*,—or even indignation with regard to the entire aspect of things. Indignation is the privilege of the Chandala; and pessimism similarly. '*The world is perfect*'—thus speaks the instinct of the most intellectual men, affirmative instinct; 'imperfection, every kind of *inferiority* to us, distance, pathos of distance, even the Chandala belongs to this perfection.' The most intellectual men, as the *strongest*, find their happiness in that in which others would find their ruin: In the labyrinth, in severity towards themselves and others, in effort; their delight is self-overcoming: with them asceticism becomes naturalness, requirement, instinct. A difficult task is regarded by them as a

privilege, to play with burdens, which crush others to death, as a *recreation*. . . . Knowledge, a form of asceticism.—They are the most venerable kind of man. That does not exclude their being the most cheerful, the most amiable. They rule not because they will, but because they *are*; they are not at liberty to be the second in rank.—The *second* in rank are: the guardians of right, the keepers of order and security, the noble warriors, the king, above all, as the highest formula of warrior, judge and keeper of the law. The second in rank are the executive of the most intellectual, the most closely associated with them, relieving them of all that is *coarse* in the work of ruling, their retinue, their right hand, their best disciples.—In all that, to repeat it once more, there is nothing arbitrary, nothing 'artificial'; what is otherwise, is artificial,—by what is otherwise, nature is put to shame. . . . By the order of castes, the *order* of *rank*, the supreme law of life itself is formulated only; the separation of the free types is necessary for the maintenance of society, for the making possible of higher and highest types,—the *inequality* of rights is the very condition of there being rights at all.—A right is a privilege. In his mode of existence, everyone has his privilege. Let us not undervalue the privileges of the *mediocre*. Life always becomes harder towards the *summit*,—the cold increases, responsibility increases. A high civilisation is a pyramid: it can only stand upon a broad basis, it has for a first prerequisite, a strongly and soundly consolidated mediocrity. Handicraft, trade, agriculture, *science*, the greater part

of art, in a word, the whole compass of business activity, is exclusively compatible with an average amount of ability and pretension; the like pursuits would be displaced among the exceptions, the instinct appropriate thereto would contradict aristocratism as well as anarchism. . . . For the mediocre it is a happiness to be mediocre; for them, the mastery in one thing, specialism, is a natural instinct. It would be altogether unworthy of a profounder intellect to see in mediocrity itself an objection. It is indeed the *first* necessity for the possibility of exceptions: a high civilisation is conditioned by it. If the exceptional man just treats the mediocre with a more delicate touch than himself and his equals, it is not merely courtesy of heart,—it is simply his duty. Whom do I hate most among the mob of the present day? The socialist mob, the Chandala apostles, who undermine the working man's instinct, his pleasure, his feeling of contentedness with his petty existence,—who make him envious, who teach him revenge. . . . The wrong never lies in unequal rights, it lies in the pretension to 'equal' rights."*

This concludes Nietzsche's description of his ideal society. In examining his morality as we shall now proceed to do, it will be well to bear this description carefully in our minds. Of a very large percentage of those who misunderstand and misjudge him, I think it may safely be said, that they have omitted to do this; for it is quite impossible not to see the consequential

* C.W., pp. 339-342.

and logical character of his morality, if one keeps the goal he is aiming at constantly in sight.

. . . . . .

At the very zenith of the reign of Christian values upon earth, under the auspices of the religion of pity, two philosophers, unknown to each other in person, one English, and the other German, began to write upon morals;—each in his own way; each with a wish to help his fellows; each, possibly, with the notion that the hospital atmosphere of modern Europe was becoming intolerable.

The results arrived at by the one, we knew as early as 1879, the other's works we are only now beginning to read in England. Herbert Spencer was the one, Friedrich Nietzsche was the other.

This is what Spencer said:—

"We regard as good the conduct furthering self-preservation, and as bad, the conduct tending to self-destruction."*

Those of you who recall Nietzsche's conclusions as stated in the first paper, will perceive that Spencer's moral principle is plainly, and in a sense, inevitably, but a half-statement of the actual fact underlying all moralities. I say inevitably, since it is in complete harmony with his views, that Life is Activity, or that it is "continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations." We have seen, however, that life is more than that; that the will to preserve self is but an indirect consequence of a still higher will: the will to acquire power for self.

* *Data of Ethics*, p. 25.

Overlooking this view, however, and assuming, for the sake of argument, that Spencer's principle is one which might perhaps be legitimately formulated from the data which biology affords, we, who are now acquainted with Nietzsche's standpoint in regard to Man, must be struck with yet another discrepancy in the statement of the doctrine, and that is, that self-preservation is, alone, held to be good. The preservation of no particular type is urged; simply self-preservation is held to be good.

True, when we examine Spencer's works closely, we do indeed see that he has an ideal of a sort: a kind of glorified industrial, possessed with almost transcendental powers for the production of useful things; it is an ideal suggested to him by the ordinary man of his time, and, even so, we remark a painful lack of outline and form in the type desired; since the "survival of the fittest" is urged as a process whereby he will be attained to.

With this stress which Spencer lays upon the bald principle of the survival of the fittest,* we begin to suspect what, all along, has been our fear in the study of his philosophy, and that is, its almost total lack of taste. Spencer, the man who could seriously contemplate the possibility of "setting up a systematic manufacture of designs for textile fabrics printed or woven, as well as for paper hangings and the like,"† does not surprise us therefore, when, in his attitude towards the

* *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. III. p. 599. *Principles of Biology*, Vol. II. p. 532.

† *Autobiography*, Vol. I. p. 309.

man of the future, he shows a proportionate want of refined feeling. On the contrary, he thereby merely urges us to acknowledge the consistent quality of his philosophy, and it is only when we come to his more extended definition of good and bad conduct that we are led to doubt even that quality.

It will be remembered that, overlooking his own very strict principle that the survival of the fittest does not necessarily imply the survival of the more desirable, in any respect (if we give this word anything like its ordinary meaning)—and, therefore, that the course of evolution, followed by a species, does not of necessity mean an ascent or an improvement, he states his moral principles more definitely as follows:—

" The conduct to which we apply the name good, is the relatively more evolved conduct; and bad is the name we apply to conduct which is relatively less evolved."*

The inconsistency here requires no comment.

Be all this as it may, Spencer and Nietzsche are, in some details, so very much alike, and each, in his way, was gifted with such extraordinary mental powers, that I should have been loath to juxtapose them here in such sharp contrast, were it not for Nietzsche's own tribute to our great philosopher, wherewith he practically suggests a comparison.

In the *Genealogy of Morals*, you remember, he says, after having reviewed other systems of ethics and found them worthless: " How much more reasonable is Mr

* *Data of Ethics*, p. 25.

Herbert Spencer's theory," and although he cannot sanction it, he adds:—" it is at least reasonable and psychologically tenable."*

We have seen why he could not sanction Spencer's moral philosophy; in the first place, because its principle was so general that it promised to rear no very definite type, and therefore revealed a total want of taste; secondly, because the very nebulous hints of the ideal to which it might attain, betray a taste so essentially opposed to his, that to accept it meant to join the ranks of his worst enemies—the decadents.†

Turning from these considerations in order to consult Nietzsche's moral philosophy, let us see what it is he says.

He who knew and remembered that the law of the " survival of the fittest " is no guarantee that a desirable type (in his sense) will ultimately survive, provided the values by which it progresses be values of decadence and degeneration, gives us the code with which he would rear his ideal man, the moral code which leads *his* way, expresses his taste, and accords with his reading of the face of Nature.

" What is good?—All that increases the feeling of power, will for power, power itself in man.

" What is bad?—All that proceeds from weakness.

" What is happiness?—The feeling that power increases—that resistance is overcome.

" Not contentedness, but more power; not peace at any price, but warfare, not virtue, but capacity (virtue

* G.M., p. 20. † C.W., p. 202.

in the Renaissance style, virtú, virtue free from any moralic acid).

" The weak and ill-constituted shall perish: first principle of our charity. And people shall help them to do so.

" What is more injurious than any crime?—Practical sympathy for all the ill-constituted and weak—Christianity."*

This is the morality of power, of healthy life, of Optimism, with which Nietzsche wished to make his ideal man paramount. It is the antithesis of everything we think we are most certain about to-day; it is the antithesis, perhaps, of everything we are most uncertain about to-day.

Its author partly divined the kind of reception moral values of this stamp would receive at the hands of the effeminate manhood of Europe. He was prepared to be reviled; he foresaw the host of misunderstandings to which his code would probably give rise. And, indeed, the agitation of the herds, and the fright of the various bell-wethers, soon found violent expression. In the third part of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* we see that he had anticipated the most likely form their attack would take.

" O my brethren," he cries, " say, am I cruel? But I say: What is about to fall, shall even be pushed.

" The all of to-day—it falleth, it decayeth. Who would keep it? But I—I will push it down besides!

" Know ye the voluptuousness that rolleth stones

* C.W., p. 242.

into steep depths? These men of to-day—look at them, how they roll into my depth!

"A prelude I am of better players, O my brethren! An example. *Act* after mine example!

"And him you do not teach to fly, teach—how to fall more quickly!"*

To see through the smug and miserable humbug of the present, the humbug that still rejoices in a clean conscience, and put an end to it; that is what he would have us do.

But, in the first place, let us be quite clear as to who it is who is really selfish and cruel, which morality actually contains the values of cruelty and brutality—Nietzsche's or the Christian's?

Often enough has his been lightly credited with them, and by men who ought to know better. Any man's criticism is, however, only a comment, a sidelight, on himself. When somebody tells us that he dislikes Strauss or Raeger, we hear nothing which may either destroy or confirm our opinion of these two musicians; but we certainly receive a very broad hint in regard to the character, taste and education of the man expressing the opinion. Likewise, when Mr Chesterton rashly asserts that Nietzsche preaches egoism,† we receive no real information concerning Nietzsche, we are, rather misinformed; but, we are given a valuable comment on Mr Chesterton himself, and that is, that he has neither read Nietzsche carefully nor troubled to understand the little he did read of him.

* Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 20. † "Orthodoxy," p. 65.

As I was saying, Nietzsche's morality has often enough been credited with the values of egoism; and, indeed, after cursorily examining the matter, nothing could seem more glaringly obvious—more self-evident (more especially to a superficial reader), than that the table of morals he gives us panders to the selfish instincts of mankind.

On inquiring into the question a little more profoundly, however, we may be surprised to find the case somewhat different from what we at first expected it to be.

According to our ideas, the desirable life of a shrub, a tree, or a breed of dogs, is maintained only by a process of selection and sacrifice. Our process is more deliberate, not perhaps so stealthy and haphazard as Nature's; we sacrifice the individual for the ideal we have of the family: we sacrifice the family for our ideal of the species, and often we have annihilated the species for our ideal of the genus.

The gardener prunes the fruit and rose trees. He has an ideal tree in his mind, to which he strives to make the trees under his care attain; therefore he is an enemy of all frail, sickly and degenerate members. The dog-breeder drowns the sickly individuals among a litter of puppies. If the number be excessive for the bitch, and he can find no foster-mother, he sacrifices even promising young dogs, for the sake of the ideal dog-family, which he has in his mind. Life—desirable Life—demands sacrifice, and not sacrifice for a metaphysical point, but, more often, for a physical one.

Unconsciously, the ancient Greeks practised this principle with the greatest possible severity.

Their ideal man was the man of spirit and combativeness; hence their life was a constant war; even their recreations were strenuous struggles—even their conversations were disputes.

"The humble man of the Christian," says Mr Bury, "would have been considered a vicious and contemptible person by Aristotle, who put forward the man of great spirit as the man of virtue."*

Sacrifice—the conscious self-sacrifice for an ideal, which we are now discussing—cannot of course be numbered among the Greek concepts. They were, first of all, men of action and spirited action. But we must not forget that it is possible for an activity which is quite unconscious to achieve a result which a conscious artistic effort could only approximate. We must remember that a peacock may excel the greatest master of deportment that the world has ever known, in the way it deports itself.

Unconscious artists, then, these Greeks merely vented a pressure within them, which craved expression of some sort; that this pressure led to heroism and valiant deeds of self-sacrifice was just as incidental to their purpose as the voluptuous grace of a tiger is to his act of walking, or to his crouch before he springs. Their purpose, above all, was to rid themselves of their superfluous spirit. It is not sufficiently understood yet, that all real artists, whether they paint, sing, write or com-

* *History of the Later Roman Empire*, Vol. I. p. 23.

pose, are, in the first place, men of superabundant energy, whose first and foremost desire in life, is to discharge that energy. The real artist is not so from choice. The charm we derive from his work, is purely, or ought to be purely incidental. This was the case with the Greeks. Seeking above all to discharge their overflowing energy, life itself became a secondary—a tertiary—consideration with them. Hence their heroism which delights and fires us. That we should now see an ideal in it, which was worth striving after, is very natural. But we must not forget that the ideal was only unconsciously pursued by them.

Some painters say, " observe and interpret masses of *form* and *colour*, masses of *light* and *shade*, the line and definition of your picture will then evolve of themselves." That some of us, on regarding a picture produced in this way, should imagine that the line and definition in it are the result of the artist's conscious effort, is comprehensible enough. The end achieved is too often confounded with the means employed in achieving it. The Greeks were not heroes from choice;—they were unconscious, artistic heroes. Forgetting the worth of life in deeds of heroism, owing to the fact that they were concerned only with the still greater worth of performing what were to them natural and necessary actions, they give us at least the picture of a people striving cheerfully after lofty and spirited ideals.

When we have understood that these ideals were merely incidental, we have not thereby reduced the beauty of the deed, we have made it a thousand times

more beautiful:—for what could be more beautiful than unconscious beauty?

It is only when we descend to a state of effete culture, or to a state of mixed hopes and conflicting aims, in which spirit has to be summoned, marshalled and gathered, that we can begin to talk of conscious heroism and conscious self-sacrifice. And although to-day we still have a vestige of the old unconscious ideal left, still, we are living at a time when ideals must be consciously striven after, and in which heroes must mostly be exhorted.

Nietzsche realised the necessity of a modern Peter the Hermit. He saw that the ideal race to which the Greeks unconsciously attained, and which made them the greatest artists the world has ever had, as their sculpture is with us to prove,—he saw that this ideal of race must be deliberately striven after to-day, there must be a deliberate mustering, marshalling and directing of forces, a conscious pruning, suppression and elimination of weakness, until, in the course of several generations, those qualities which must now be willed, become incorporated and instinctive; until they become as unconscious as they were in the ancient Greeks, and thus acquire that purity and stability which characterise unconscious beauty alone.

This principle of Nietzsche's, which, if we banish squeamish prejudices, we know to be our principle also, is simply the old time-honoured law, that some one, some few must suffer, if an ideal race is to be attained to at all,

In their ancient doctrine of mysteries, the Greeks actually pronounced *pain* holy. Pain to them, was sanctified in general by the pains of childbirth. All becoming and growing, all promise of life, by analogy, seemed to require the halo of pain. Suffering was not feared as we fear it to-day; it was not considered an evil;—it seemed, rather, a necessity of promising life, as much as pleasure itself.*

Now, how does the so-called altruistic morality of Christianity face these questions? In the first place, as Mr Bury says, " Christianity emphasised the privileges, hopes and fears of the individual, Christ died for each man."†

" ' Immortality ' granted to every Tom, Dick and Harry, has hitherto been the worst, the most vicious outrage on noble humanity—and let us not underestimate the calamity which, proceeding from Christianity, has insinuated itself even into politics. At present nobody has any longer the courage for separate rights, for rights of domination, for a feeling of reverence for himself and his equals,—for *pathos* of *distance*.‡ And yet Christianity owes its *triumph* to this pitiable flattery of personal vanity,—it has thereby enticed over to its side all the ill-constituted, the seditiously-disposed, the ill-fortuned, the whole scum and dross of humanity. ' Salvation of the soul '—means, in plain words, ' the world revolves around me.' "§

* C.W., p. 230. *See* also remarks on Hedonism in the second paper.

† *History of the Later Roman Empire*, Vol. I. p. 33.

‡ C.W., pp. 306, 307.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 306.

The heroic ideal is thus maimed and practically done away with. " I and my soul," become all-important—an ideal race is a minor matter, the whole kind gets the upper hand.

Mr Bury actually goes so far as to attribute the disintegration of the Roman Empire, partly to this baneful centralisation of interests in each individual, to the extinction of an ideal of manhood on earth.

Every human creature that succeeds in filling his lungs with air, be he botched or beautiful, sick or sound, becomes sanctified through this preservative notion of " soul," and must be maintained,—even though an ideal of race ultimately becomes impossible, even though mankind ultimately assumes the appearance of the collected patients of all the world's hospitals and infirmaries,—even though the noble plants get stifled under the matted mass of tares that grow about them.

As a matter of fact, however, Christianity knows no tares. The word was once used metaphorically by the Founder of the Creed; but its application to humanity seems to have become obsolete. No,—every sprout is a noble plant,—every blade must be nurtured, fostered and pampered, until the healthy begin to doubt whether it is right or even holy to be as they are; till everyone is either an invalid or an invalid's attendant, until the human world becomes, as we see it to-day, more than two-thirds botched, patched and bungled.

This is genuine selfishness; this is selfishness caught napping—or else nothing is right, nothing is true, nothing is worth while.

The sacrifice of the ideal type for the soul of the individual; the sacrifice of the ideal genus for the motley species: that is what is aimed at and achieved to-day, and who doubts that this is the method sanctioned—nay, recommended, by the Christian Church?

Formerly, the heroic ideal was, that sacrifice is a worthy deed, when performed for the ideal of one's race or genus. Christianity not only altered the motive of the deed, by offering a post-mortem reward for it; but, in the narrow Christian view, even the deed itself shrank, and became an action of pity for one's neighbour, of love for one's friends.

Schopenhauer consistently made pity the greatest virtue; but, obviously only because his philosophy denied life and was thoroughly nihilistic.

To-day, pain must, above all things, be avoided; the individual must survive; the ideal race is a secondary, a minor—in any case—a much less significant—factor in life. We are all alike before God.

" And base things of the world, and things which are despised has God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are."

Nietzsche's teaching was called egoism;—by how many, I wonder, who understood this passage:—

" Uncommon is the highest virtue, and of little use; shining it is and chaste in its splendour: a giving virtue is the highest virtue.

" Verily, I believe I have found you out, my disciples: ye seek, like me, after a given virtue. . . . Ye compel all things to come unto you and into you, in

order that they may flow back from your well as gifts of your love.

"Verily such a giving love must become a robber as regardeth all values; but I call that selfishness healthy and holy.

"There is another selfishness, a very poor one, a starving one which ever seeketh to steal; the selfishness of the sickly, sickly selfishness.

"With a thief's eye it looketh at all that glittereth; with the crowing of hunger it measureth him who hath plenty to eat; and it ever stealeth round the table of givers.

"Disease speaketh in that craving, and invisible degeneration; of a sick body speaketh the thief-like craving of that selfishness.

"Tell me, my brethren: what regard we as the bad and the worst thing? Is it not degeneration?—And we always suspect degeneration wherever the giving soul is lacking.

"Upwards goeth our way, from species to super-species. But a horror for us is the degenerating mind which saith: 'All for myself!'" *

The sick and impotent man, in Nietzsche's opinion, is the one who must, of necessity, be selfish, and must be unjustifiably so. He has nought to give; he must take from the sound and the powerful if he wish to maintain himself. Giving, when it is compatible with the survival of the giver, means superabundance. "The excess of power only, is the proof of power."†

The Greeks, the natural artists, giving from super-

* Z., "Of the Giving Virtue." † C.W., p. 97.

abundance, because they must give or choke, this is Nietzsche's notion of giving.

The fulness of life, overflowing life, is distinctly conducive to the act of giving; in fact, Nietzsche does not think it at all impossible that even the custom of sacrificial offerings may partly have arisen from the desire to bestow, which superfluity provokes. "A proud people needs a God in order to sacrifice," he suggests.*

What seem to be strains of pure egoism, certainly do run through Nietzsche's teaching; but let us hear his own words upon the matter:—

"Selfishness," he says, "has as much value as the physiological value of him who possesses it: it may be very valuable, or it may be vile and contemptible. Each individual may be looked at with respect to whether he represents an ascending or a descending line of life. When that is determined we have a canon for the valuation of his selfishness. If he represents the ascent of the line of life, his value is in fact very great—and on account of the collective life which in him makes a *further* step, the concern about his maintenance, about providing his optimum of conditions, may even be extreme. . . . If he represents descending development, decay, chronic degeneration, or sickening, he has little worth [his egoism then amounts to the will to maintain his kind, therefore to the will to degeneration] and the greatest fairness would have him *take away* as little as possible from the well-constituted. He is then no more than a parasite."†

* C.W., p. 258. † C.W., pp. 192, 193.

What could be more rational, more true to experience, more self-evident to all who have thought upon this matter?

And is it supposed that an egoist wrote these words?:—

"Thus willeth the tribe of noble souls: they wish not to have anything *for nothing*, least of all life.

"Whoever is of the mob, will live for nothing. But we others unto whom life gave itself,—we are wondering *what* we shall best give in *return!*

"And verily, this is a noble speech, that saith: 'The promises life maketh unto us, we shall keep!'

"One shall not wish to enjoy one's self where one doth not give enjoyment."*

Not egoism, but broad, grand altruism, is the kernel of Nietzsche's philosophy. In wishing to disabuse our minds of the illusion that our petty unselfishness, gentleness, and pity are of any real worth; in crying: "Alas, where in the world have greater follies happened than with the pitiful. And what in the world hath done more harm than the follies of the pitiful;"† he certainly led the superficial to suppose that selfishness was the aim and mainspring of his teaching.

But, he says in this respect, we are all too short-sighted, and living, as it were, too much from day to day. The far-sighted one sees greater and more weighty duties than the love of his neighbour. The generation of the future, their health and their welfare press heavily upon him, and he is terribly conscious of

* Z., "Of Old and New Tables, ¶ 5. † Z., "Of the Pitiful."

the responsibility which he and others share in shaping them.

" Do I counsel you to love your neighbour? I rather counsel you to flee from your neighbour and to love the most remote.

" Love unto the most remote future man, is higher than love unto your neighbour.

" It is the more remote [your children and your children's children] who pay for your love unto your neighbour.*

" Your children's land ye shall love (be this love your new nobility!), the land undiscovered in the remotest sea! For it I bid your sails seek and seek!

" In your children ye shall make amends for being your father's children. Thus ye shall redeem all that is past! This new table I put over you! "†

But, for this ideal of Nietzsche's, we must be harder and more tenacious than we are. The weakness of our present sentiments must reveal its folly to us, and, if we have the far-sighted gaze, we must see that it is dangerous folly. I have already spoken, somewhat at length, on this question of hardness. I tried to show, in opposition to Mr Chesterton, that it was precisely the prerequisite of an oligarchy, in which commanders are commanders from force of temperament and character. All of you who have tried at one time or other to command others, even if these others have been but little children, must have learned how completely and utterly

* Z., " Of Love for One's Neighbour."
† Z., " Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 12.

you first had to gain command over yourselves. How you first had to control your heart in its sympathy, your greater wisdom and the anger that it often helped to kindle in you, your hand and mouth in their frowardness, and your eyes which will persist in seeing too much. This initial hardness, this first stage of hardness which constitutes the attitude towards oneself, only,—what is it compared with the ultimate hardness which is requisite for commanding individuals, often refractory, to march along roads of which you, alone, know the end and direction?—what is it compared with the hardness that overlooks an isolated case, however deserving of attention, whenever that isolated case threatens to arrest the general grand march you are leading.

This hardness, we are fast losing to-day. Softer and more degenerate qualities are taking its place, and pity is the coping-stone of them all. Pity—that attitude towards our fellow-creatures, which, as you know, all of us, individually resent most bitterly, when it is directed at us; pity which makes us recoil when it is breathed upon us even by our best friend;—this is the quality which is fast becoming the greatest virtue amongst us; it was, as we saw in the last lecture, the device upon the shields of all slaves, invalids and pygmies. With it they elevated themselves. We feel there is something debasing in it. Whatever we may say in its support, we know it is ignoble—or, if we don't, why, pray, do all those amongst us who have any taste for courage, independence and nobility of spirit, resent and resist it with all our might?

"Alas, where in the world have greater follies happened than with the pitiful!" Nietzsche cries: "And what in the world hath done more harm than the follies of the pitiful?"*

"What is more injurious than any crime?" he asks. "Practical sympathy for all the ill-constituted and weak—Christianity."

That we may be fit to found Nietzsche's society, he would perforce have us harder.

"Ye higher men, think ye that I live to make well what ye made badly?

"Or think ye that I meant to pillow you sufferers more comfortably for the future? Or to show new and easier footpaths unto you restless, gone astray on roads and mountains? Nay! Nay! Three times Nay! Ever more, ever better ones of your tribes shall perish. For ye shall have ever a worse and harder life. Only thus—

"Only thus man groweth up unto *that* height where the lightning striketh and breaketh him; high enough for the lightning!

"Towards few things, towards long things, towards remote things, my mind and my longing turn. What concern hath your petty, manifold short misery for me!

"Ye do not yet suffer enough! For ye suffer from yourselves, ye have never yet suffered *from man.*

"Ye would lie, did ye say otherwise! None of you suffereth from what I have suffered."†

In a race, like ours, in which changes are slow to show themselves, in which the life of one individual is

* Z., "Of the Pitiful." † Z., "Of Higher Man," ¶ 6.

not long enough for him to perceive even the dawn of effects which he has done his utmost to cause, there is a great danger, which attacks the shallow more especially; that of losing hope, and of seeking consolation in immediate advantages, alone, to the ruin and destruction of remoter and greater advantages. Nietzsche knew this and therefore he cries: " Alas I have known noble ones who have lost their highest hope. And then they slandered all high hopes. But by my love and hope, I conjure thee, throw not away the hero in thy soul! Keep holy thy highest hope! "*

It ought to be clear now, that his preaching of the Gospel of hardness, is no idle satisfaction of a cruel lust in his nature; it is rather the action of one who would help us to fight our way up to a more dignified type.

" When ye despise what is agreeable and a soft bed, and know not how to make your bed far enough from the effeminate: then is the origin of your virtue."†

" Zarathustra was a friend of all such as make distant voyages and like not to live without danger."‡

For this hardness; for this will to love only one's children's land, we must first of all develop a will. The lack of will, and the disease of it, where it does exist, is at the bottom of our effeminacy in Europe to-day.

We must learn the firmness of purpose which distinguishes good commanders, or the intelligence and honesty to admit that we can be but followers.

Those who cannot command must seek their signifi-

* Z., "Of the Tree on the Hill."
† Z., "Of the Giving Virtue."
‡ Z., "Of the Vision and the Riddle."

cance in obeying. Freedom, like everything else, is only good relatively. Freedom is an instrument that requires to be used by a skilled hand.

" Thou callest thyself free? . . .

" Art thou such a one as to be permitted to escape a yoke? Many there are who threw away everything they were worth when they threw away their servitude.

" Free from what? How should that concern Zarathustra? Clearly thine eye shall answer: free *for* what.

" Canst thou give thyself thine evil and thy good, hanging thy will above thee as a law? Canst thou be thine own judge and the avenger of thine own law?

" Terrible it is to be alone with the judge and avenger of one's own law."*

The promises we make unto ourselves, we must learn to keep. If we cannot keep our word to ourselves, how shall we hope to be commanders? We are then only followers still. Self-command is the first step of all commanding. " Many a one can give rules to himself [and make lofty resolutions]; but there lacketh much in his obeying them! "†

" Oh, that ye understood my *word:* ' Be sure to do whatever ye like,—but first of all be such as can will!' "‡

With the future of mankind, alone, in our minds, with the possibility of Superman earnestly and completely realised, we unconsciously project our gaze over and beyond the heads of our fellows. Our purpose lies somewhere behind our present horizon; we must be

* Z., " Of the Way of the Creator."
† Z., " Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 4.
‡ Z., " Of the Belittling Virtue."

brave and patient sailors. The thought of our neighbour is a temptation, a magnet, threatening to draw our purpose sideways; true altruism bids us banish our fawning neighbour from our thoughts.

Such a purpose, with the means it exacts, will develop those qualities in us which will ultimately lead us to regard our present hypersensitiveness and readiness to re-act to the slightest stimulus, as conditions of disease, as states of sickness.

We must cease asking ourselves *what* we would be free from; our question must be: what would we be free for?

"Beyond-man is my care; with me, *he* and *not* man is the first and only thing. Not the neighbour, nor the poorest one, not the greatest sufferer, not the best one.

"O my brethren, what I can love in man, is that he is a transition and destruction, and even in you there are many things that make me love and hope.

"For to-day, the petty folk have become master. They all preach submission and resignation and policy and diligence and regard and the long etcetera of petty virtues.

"These ask, and ask, and weary not with asking:

"How doth man preserve himself best, longest and most agreeably? Thereby they are the masters of to-day. Surpass these masters of to-day, O my brethren, the petty folk. They are the greatest danger for Superman!

"Surpass, ye higher men, the petty virtues, the petty policies, the grains-of-sand-regards, the swarm-

ing of ants, the smug ease, the happiness of the greatest number! "*

Now, perhaps, we are beginning to see more clearly into Nietzsche's so-called egoism. We no longer shudder at the apparent hardness of his words; his inclemency becomes austerity, his love for mankind appears grander and deeper than ours. His severity is really the noblest compassion.

We know now what he means when he says:— " Unto the incurable, one shall not go to be physician. But more *courage* is requisite for making an end than for making a new verse. That is known unto all physicians and poets."†

" Life is hard to bear. But do not pretend to be so frail. . . . What have we in common with the rose-bud that trembleth because a drop of dew lieth on its body?‡

" What is good?—All that increases the feeling of power, will to power, power itself, in man.

" What is bad?—All that proceeds from weakness."

We now see the necessity of these words, we now see how inevitable they are, if we are to achieve Nietzsche's ideal.

" There is no harder lot in all human fate, than when the powerful of the earth are not at the same time the first men. There everything becometh false and warped and monstrous.§

" For my brethren what is best shall rule; what is

* Z., "Of Higher Man," ¶ 3.
† Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 17.
‡ Z., "Of Reading and Writing."
§ Z., "Of the Conversation with the Kings," ¶ 1.

best will rule! And where the teaching soundeth different, the best is lacking."*

With this new table reigning, Nietzsche assures us that things will be more cheerful, more tasteful, on earth. Man's smile will no longer be spasmodically checked and turned to a grimace when he bows his head to glance at his fellows and their lot. Pain the inevitable concomitant of all becoming, of all birth, will be accepted as a necessary factor in existence. The scurry to avoid it will cease, and man will halt at his Noon, at his Great Mid-day, in order to scan the land of his child —the Superman, which will lie remotely on the horizon —bright in the glow of the afternoon sun.

Perhaps this ideal seems vain, over-strained—dreamy? It may even raise a laugh among those who have perhaps never observed the changes that are possible, even in a single life, if high ideals, instead of base ones, are striven after.

But Nietzsche does not tell you to expect the realisation of your ideal to-morrow or the next day. He says:—

"Not yourselves, perhaps my brethren! But ye could create yourselves into fathers and fore-fathers of Superman, and let this be your best creating."†

"What hath hitherto been the greatest sin on earth? Was it not the word of him who said: 'Woe unto those who laugh here?'

"Did he himself find no reasons for laughing on earth? If so, he sought but ill. A child findeth reasons here.‡

* Z., "Of Old and New Tables," ¶ 21.
† Z., "On the Blissful Islands." ‡ Z., "Of Higher Man," ¶ 16.

" This crown of laughter, the crown of rose-wreaths —I myself have put this crown on my head; I myself have proclaimed my laughter holy. No other I found to-day strong enough for that.*

" Since man came into existence, he hath had too little joy. That alone, my brethren, is our original sin!†

" How many things are still possible! *Learn*, I pray, to laugh beyond yourselves! Raise your hearts, ye good dancers, high! higher! And forget not the good laughter!

" This crown of laughter, the crown of rose-wreaths —unto you, my brethren, I throw this crown! The laughter I have proclaimed holy. Ye higher men, *learn* how to laugh! "‡

* Z., " Of Higher Man," ¶ 18. † Z., " Of the Pitiful."
‡ Z., " Of Higher Man," ¶ 20.

THE END

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